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EDITORIAL

A GOOD WORD FOR GORBY

On a recent *Crossfire* program, co-host Patrick Buchanan castigated President Reagan's pre-summit speech about human rights in the Soviet Union as "comsymp" talk. What upset the former White House ghost was the spectacle of a President who once called the Russians the "focus of all evil in the modern world" welcoming Soviet progress on human rights and acknowledging that the United States has its own "agonizing" problems of homelessness, racism and unemployment.

Four days after Reagan made his speech, more than a hundred dissidents and activists from different political factions gathered in Moscow to form the Democratic Union, the first independent political party in recent Soviet history. The new party's platform—political, economic and spiritual pluralism, a multiparty system and a mixed free-market economy—anticipates some of the reforms that are on Mikhail Gorbachev's agenda for the June 29 party conference. The K.G.B.'s crackdown on the dissidents shows that *perestroika* has its limits.

We can only hope that the conciliatory tone of Reagan's speech signals a U.S. decision to intervene on Gorbachev's side in the party struggle under way in Moscow. Perhaps Reagan's advisers, mindful of a political battle in this country, heeded the polls that register a sea change in American public opinion. In a recent survey by the Americans Talk Security Project, 59 percent of the respondents agreed that "economic competitors like Japan pose more of a threat to our national security than our traditional military adversaries like the Soviets."

As Egon Bahr, the German Social Democrat and former Cabinet member under Willy Brandt, said last year, it's time to test Gorbachev, not missiles. The majority of Americans, who want to put the cold war behind them, would probably agree.

NUNN ISN'T THE ONE
David Corn
Jefferson Morley

FIRING NORIEGA
Michael Massing

THE RIGHTS OF HIV CARRIERS
Mark Gevisser

THE DAYS AND NIGHTS OF ROY COHN
Robert Sherrill

FRENCH SOCIALISM
Michael Harrington

GORBACHEV'S OPPOSITION

THE FOES OF *PERESTROIKA* SOUND OFF

DEV MURARKA

On the eve of next month's nationwide Communist Party conference, the first in the Soviet Union since 1941, General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and his reforms face widespread resistance and defiant opposition. In a May 7 speech Gorbachev called for the election of "active supporters of *perestroika*" to the meeting that could decide its fate.

For an understanding of the growing defiance among the bureaucracy and a small section of the intelligentsia toward de-Stalinization and *perestroika*, one must look back to last autumn, when Gorbachev came under visible pressure to modify his radical position on a number of key issues—and did so. To what extent he really changed plans, and for what period of time, remains highly controversial and debatable. But it is beyond debate that these compromises, such as those reflected in his address of November 2 celebrating the seventieth anniversary of the October Revolution, opened up opportunities for the opponents of *perestroika* to push harder for maintaining the status quo—in the name of *perestroika*! The modifications also demoralized Gorbachev's supporters.

This development clearly underlined the fact that a struggle was on, and that its outcome could not be taken as a foregone conclusion. Since neither side is sure of its relative strength in the public arena, both are engaged in probing operations. Popular feeling about the current state of this battle has been best described by Andrei Nuikin in two recent issues of the journal *Novy Mir*. Titled "Ideals or Interests?" Nuikin's essay poses the question, "From where

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LETTERS.

LIBERATION LIVES

Brooklyn

As a lesbian activist and recent alumna of the Yale Gay and Lesbian Cooperative, I found Mark Gevisser's March 26 article, "Lesbian and Gay Students Choose," quite interesting. But Gevisser paints the picture a bit too bleakly: There are thousands of gay and lesbian student activists for whom "liberation" is not "too strong a word," who are passionately fighting for more than the most narrowly conceived toleration and "acceptance." Perhaps more important, many lesbians and gay men are working as openly gay and militantly gay liberationist members of campus Central America solidarity, antinuclear, antiapartheid and labor support groups, thereby establishing a significant openly gay presence in the student left. It is true that it's a constant struggle to keep lesbian and gay student organizations from succumbing to the tide of white, male and upper-class-identified "gay respectability"—for a variety of reasons, hinging on the youth and relative vulnerability of gay and lesbian students, and on the skewed class and race composition of universities. But we haven't lost the struggle yet. As lesbian and gay activism outside the campus grows more militant (as can be witnessed in the formation of wonderful groups like ACT UP, which are simultaneously radical and—surprise!—effective), so too will gay and lesbian student activism. *Donna Minkowitz*

FAR OUT, MAN

Princeton, N.J.

Wow! I begin with this simple reference to Jon Wiener's recent article, "Looking Back, Moving Ahead" [March 26], about contemporary students' debate with the legacy of the 1960s. Wow (which I proclaim with all the hippie consciousness I can dredge up; see Charles Reich's *The Greening of America*), I simply find Wiener's claims about resurgent 1960s culture to be misdirected and counterproductive. He implies we must begin to take heart from the resurgence of 1960s culture, as if it is the harbinger of a return to the good old days of the drug culture and Reich's Consciousness III. Maybe the drug culture hasn't died now that we see the reemergence of the tie-dyed and acid-preferring hippies!

As a sometime student activist of the 1980s (an ominous title), I am appalled at Wiener's giddy glorification of the 1960s youth culture. I see it as no great feat that these nuevo-hippies prefer LSD to yuppie cocaine. To discern between LSD and cocaine isn't some wonderful nascent class consciousness, it is another foot stuck in the mire of an anemic cultural revolution that was revolutionary only to those of the middle and professional classes who were privy to this revolution. Why did the longhairs get beat up by the hardhats? The culture of the 1960s is no great thing to see rising again. What vestiges do happen to rise again do so in large part because of the vagaries of the fashion industry's selling peace signs and commercial radio's sapping the "classics" for all the nostalgia they can get. If we are to acclaim progressive culture, we can do better than praising a so-readily consumptive and commercial one.

Let's learn the lessons of the political movements of the 1960s (and before) and examine what was being said and done, but let's not try a nostalgic return to sex, drugs and rock and roll. We will only miss the boat again if Jackson is to be our McGovern and Bush our Nixon. *Andrew Fisk*

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Washington

Alexander Cockburn accurately expresses my resentment of clean, easy categorization of decades and generations, for "decanting the past out of ten-year measuring jars" ["What's the Matter Here?" March 26]. As a 23-year-old college graduate, I tire of the bogus representation of my generation as either fun-loving, bemused kids in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* or lost yuppie Visigoths in *Bright Lights, Big City*. The masturbatory Hollywood attempts at social directness and relevance are as wrong as the neo "Lost Generation" moniker. How many people know that the term was coined by Gertrude Stein, not Hemingway? Hemingway in fact despised the term, rebuking Stein for "cheap, easy labels" (*A Moveable Feast*). Similarly, trying to shuffle my generation into boxes on the left misses certain aspects—personalities, music, attitudes, the stuff of Fitzgerald and Hemingway. I think if any comparison is to be made, it is to the 1950s; like the kids of the Eisenhower years, we have very little understanding and therefore tolerance of aberrant life styles or cultures, hereditary knee-jerk political philosophies and a criminal inability to think in metaphor. Yet we do have a few beats here and there.

It surprises me that our art and culture are gaining recognition, simply because we've been ignored for so long. Ten years on, that battered yuppie flagship of fading hippiedom, *Rolling Stone*, declares that the Sex Pistols' *Never Mind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols* is the second greatest album of the past twenty years, right behind *Sgt. Pepper*. Sure, nobody expects anything but boring nostalgia for the 1960s from *Rolling Stone*, but this irony seems a little much even for them. For the most part *Rolling Stone* ignored the impact and relevance of the punk explosion of 1977 (largely because punks are so hostile to the farcical unreality of the hippie dream). Bono, the lead singer for U2, admits that *Never Mind the Bollocks* was one of the most influential albums of his adolescence and that U2 might not exist today if not for the doors opened by bands like the Clash and the Pistols. Yet radio has become so entrenched in shock-jocking and making money that our songs go to college radio or England for exposure. That's why Adam Clayton, bass player for U2, thanked everyone in college radio when he received a Grammy for album of the year. "I don't know where we'd be without you," Clayton said. And why 10,000 Maniacs' *In My Tribe* is "proof that pop music in the 80s can grab hold of reality and win," according to England's *Melody Maker*. And now we're getting noticed. Perhaps the fading twilight of the Reagan era allows the fireflies to glow that much brighter.

Like the 1950s, we have our share of bullies, both in politics and personal lives. No gym teacher could make the rugby-clad, baseball-capped Neanderthals I see in bars dress so alike, and where corpulent bastards like Ed Meese get off thinking they can still get away with it, after all we've been through, confuses and saddens me. It also repulses some of my friends, who, like the beats, are at odds with the rest of their generation. Comparisons should not be made to the 1960s. The condescension some middle-aged activists harbor toward us reads like the stereotypical grandfather babbling about past glories, romanticizing that past into fiction in an attempt to legitimize selfish dreams and silly actions. Ah, yes—that wonderful time when fun was vomiting from too many bad drugs and rolling about in the mud. Where are they now? Nepal, Mexico, insane or dead.

Meanwhile, back in 1988, the artists drift aimlessly around, feeling more apathetic about political nightmares than ever before, and the great schoolyard bully of the *Our Gang* comedies runs our government and fills our bars. One of the best and most influential college bands, REM, is finally heard by the public gallery singing about "Exhuming McCarthy"—one of the band's albums has finally broken the top ten.

Not that it will make much difference. Like the Smiths (quoted in the same *Nation* in Mark Gevisser's article "Lesbian and Gay Students Choose"), their best work is behind them. And by the time we see an article or essay in *Harper's* about "The New Beats" or something, it will be after the fact. Despite the best efforts of John Hughes and pretty-boy fast-food writers, we won't accept ourselves as unique by virtue of disillusion—as Hemingway said, "Every generation is lost in one way or another." There are just (as the great literary character of the 1950s Holden Caulfield might say) too many bastards out there to deal with. But, as Natalie Merchant of 10,000 Maniacs notes in "Hey Jack Kerouac," during the worst of times—the plastic, unsexy 1980s or 1950s—one might hear, above the ignorant armies clashing by night, the young human soul, in all its beauty and confusion, "howling at night." *Mark G. Judge*

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EDITORIALS.

Age of Aquarius

Last week's explosion of stories about revelations in Donald Regan's new book, *For the Record: From Wall Street to Washington*, that Nancy Reagan planned the President's activities according to the advice of an astrologer emitted a heavy cloud of publishing hype and tabloid journalism. It was as if the *National Enquirer* had merged with *The New York Times*. All that was missing were rumors that Elvis is alive and has been hiding out in the Lincoln bedroom for the past seven years. As it was, we got Johnny Carson jokes mingled with political punditry assessing the impact of Regan's exposé on George Bush's campaign and on Ronald Reagan's place in history ("very damaging," *The New York Times* quoted a "Republican strategist" as saying).

As for history, students of the Reagan years will now have to consult both the President's and the First Lady's charts in order to understand various momentous decisions. To give them a head start, we have culled some actual prognostications from the horoscope columns of *The Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times* for important dates over the past seven years. We found the results disturbing, for they indicate that either Ron (Aquarius) or Nancy (Cancer) ignored some urgent if typically cryptic augurs.

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For example, on October 23, 1983, the day that a bomb exploded in the Marine barracks near the Beirut airport, killing 241 Americans, Aquarians were advised by *The Post*'s seer to "Stress security, safety measures." Or, to swing to a more trivial event, Nancy could have read in the *Los Angeles Times*, on the day the President made his off-mike quip, "I've signed legislation which outlaws Russia forever. The bombing begins in five minutes," the warning, "Amusements may be more costly than you plan on." More clear-cut, at least psychologically, was the insight in *The Post* the day of the bombing of Libya: "Logic could take back seat—heart tends to rule head, emotional responses dominate."

Clearly, however, Reagan ignored the admonition in *The Post* ("Attend to basic issues") before his first press conference on the Iran/*contra* scandal, when he said that no third countries were involved in the arms shipments to Iran. Later, he had to issue a correction admitting Israel's role.

Although Nancy did not go to the Reykjavik summit, on the advice of her personal astrologer, she must have descried a hidden or double-edged message in the *Times* column that day: "A fresh start helps the relationship." Perhaps she promptly called her husband and urged him to propose abolishing all nuclear weapons. Alas, it was not in the Star Wars. She surely heeded the green light in her horoscope for August 19, 1981, the day U.S. planes downed two Libyan fighters over the Gulf of Sidra: "Expansion is keynoted; you perceive potential and are able to communicate ideas in a graphic manner." And she must have passed on this advice on March 16, when the Administration ordered U.S. troops to Honduras: "This is the day for you to . . . set up shop in a different location." As for the President, he could have pondered the following on Black Monday: "Your counsel will be sought in connection with . . . money belonging to another. . . . Answer to problem could be found in study of arcane literature."

But enough of divinations past. Unreported in all the fuss over the Regan book was a little-known White House publication called the First Lady's Weekly Astrological Summary, a sort of distaff-side version of the President's daily intelligence briefings. With the assistance of a highly placed source in the Hollywood astrological community, Mme. Zeguna ("Astrologer to the Stars"), we have been able to reconstruct the current week's star-crossed summary.

PRESIDENTIAL HOROSCOPE FOR MAY 14–21

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20–Feb. 18)* An unfavorable aspect between Pluto and the Moon means that you should put your affairs in order. Ignore newspaper gossip about loved ones. Do not allow negative comments about previous sources of advice to disillusion you about stellar mentors (please remit last week's bill—Mme. Z). Anoint your successor; if Bush tries to distance himself from you, tell him you've just remembered personally briefing him on Iran/*contra*. Your Sun sign favors the May 29 meeting in the East. The Red Star is ascendant in Moscow; peace may be at hand and your place in history assured despite Don Regan's nasty book. Remember, dear Ronnie, that the fault is not in the stars but in your underlings.

Afghan Designs

Islamabad, Pakistan

Despite the signing of the Geneva accord on Afghanistan last month, the Reagan Administration and President Mohammad Zia ul-Haq of Pakistan appear resolved to topple the Kabul regime of President Najibullah before the year is out. However, the strategy is unlikely to bring peace to Afghanistan.

Western diplomats and senior Pakistani officials say that the United States and President Zia are determined to support a drive on Kabul by mujahedeen guerrillas after August 15, when only 50 percent of the Russians' 115,000 troops should be left in Afghanistan. Sources say the U.S.-Pakistan plan calls for three months of psychological warfare aimed at demoralizing the Najibullah regime, followed by the conquest of smaller towns and finally the siege of Kabul. Washington and Islamabad favor a short, decisive offensive. A prolonged civil war could lead to increased domestic problems for President Zia, while the Reagan Administration would like to see the fall of the Afghan capital before President Reagan leaves office in January.

According to *The New York Times* of May 6, Washington told the mujahedeen that it would welcome the formation of a provisional government, which would gain international recognition even if it was not in Kabul. The only Afghan leader General Zia thinks capable of forming such a government is Gulbuddin Hekmetyar, the fundamentalist chief of the Hizbe Islamic Party and the head of the seven-party Alliance resistance. Western diplomats say that Hizbe is stockpiling fifty to sixty truckloads of weapons and ammunition inside Afghanistan every day. Other moderate and fundamentalist leaders in the Alliance told me they have received little of the $600 million worth of weapons the United States and Saudi Arabia have provided the guerrillas since January.

Conservatives in Washington also back Hekmetyar, even though he is vehemently anti-Western and has only limited support among Afghans. By underwriting the domination of a single group in the Alliance, the United States would be repeating the mistake made by the Russians in their support of only one faction in Kabul.

However, Hekmetyar's line is admired by Pakistani conservatives and the military. He has called for future ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan, is strongly opposed to Pakistan's traditional enemy, India, and is determined to bring about the Islamic revolution in Afghanistan that General Zia has failed to accomplish in Pakistan.

A group of civilians in the Zia government oppose the pro-Hekmetyar stance. They point out the high risks of such a strategy—adverse reactions by India and the Soviet Union, which are unlikely to tolerate a pro-Pakistan fundamentalist government in Kabul, and domestic repercussions if the civil war drags on and the 3 million Afghan refugees do not return home.

This nonmilitary lobby advocates the formation of a coalition government and negotiations among all Afghan parties, including Kabul, through U.N. mediator Diego Cor-

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dovez. Anything less, they argue, would leave Afghanistan in a permanent state of civil war, thus posing a greater risk to Pakistan's security. Because they lack U.S. support, however, the civilians have already lost the debate, sources say.

Hekmetyar's policies "are a divisive force and can never unify the Afghans," a Western diplomat told me. Although the fundamentalist leader has built up a smooth-running party machine with U.S. largesse, the three moderate rebel parties dislike him intensely. They favor calling a grand tribal council to elect an interim government. The other fundamentalist factions are now uniting in order to oppose Hekmetyar more effectively. Both the United States and Pakistan grossly underestimate the durability of the Najibullah regime and are banking too much on Moscow's apparent lack of interest in what happens in Kabul once its troops pull out. The Russians may eventually let Najibullah sink, but they will certainly want a say in the next Kabul government. Also, Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who recently received Najibullah in New Delhi and has promised him aid, is unlikely to let Pakistan get away with kingmaking games in Kabul.

The key to peace in Afghanistan still lies in the Cordovez effort to form a coalition government. But with the belligerent mood in Islamabad and Washington, there appears to be little time for rapprochement with Kabul. The present strategy can lead only to an internecine war in Afghanistan, the worsening of relations between India and Pakistan, and Soviet frustration with Washington that could endanger the fragile détente. AHMED RASHID

Ahmed Rashid is the Pakistan/Afghanistan correspondent for The Independent *and* The Observer *of London.*

A Dirty War

Buried by news of the Colombian Army's proclaimed offensive against the Medellín drug cartel (an offensive discounted by many Colombians, who note that no leading trafficker has been caught and that the offensive seems mainly to involve televised press conferences for displaying seized cocaine) was the story of the kidnapping and subsequent release by the left-wing National Liberation Army of fifteen Colombian and foreign officials, diplomats and journalists. The guerrillas took the action to protest the "dirty war" being waged by right-wing paramilitary forces against the political left and, more specifically, to call attention to a report by the country's intelligence agency linking members of the army's Voltigeros Brigade with the massacre of more than twenty peasants in the town of Urabá last month. One of those held hostage, Luz Marina Giraldo, a journalist with the country's major television news team, says the report surprised few Colombians, who have long known of the connection between the military and the death squads. Indeed, this connection is highlighted in Amnesty International's recently released study, "Colombia: A Human Rights Emergency," which identifies a deliberate policy of terror and political murder carried out by the armed forces.

Last year the government attributed more than 1,000 political killings to death squads, and since then, according to Amnesty, "the range of victims has extended far beyond left-wing opponents of the government to include people known for their civic, academic or cultural contribution to society." Teachers, farmers, peasants, journalists, artists, labor leaders and human rights activists are among those who have been murdered, tortured or "disappeared." Since January, according to government records, there has been an average of ten political murders a day—all this in a place that has the world's highest ratio of killings per capita among countries not at war, and in which murder is the principal cause of death for men between the ages of 15 and 44.

Despite overwhelming evidence implicating the armed forces in this incipient war against the populace, little official action has been taken. Those few soldiers who have been accused of vicious acts have been tried in military courts and usually acquitted. Over much of the countryside the army operates with impunity, using the presence of guerrillas as an excuse for imposing stringent restrictions on local populations. It is precisely in those areas under increased military control, reports Amnesty, that the death squads are most active.

The Colombian government, which has only the most tenuous hold on the military, immediately dismissed Amnesty's report. Yet even as the report was being released, officials announced the convictions of three soldiers for the torture and mutilation of prisoners—the first time that military figures have been condemned for human rights violations in Colombia. Nevertheless, army spokesman Col. Eduardo Arevalo has insisted that it is "physically and morally impossible" for security forces to commit such violations.

Meanwhile, in the United States, all perspective has been lost in the obsession with the drug trade. John Lawn, head of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, has suggested that his agents spray herbicides over vast sectors of Colombia's interior in hopes of destroying coca and marijuana crops, heedless of the danger to agriculture and human health. Senator John Kerry's office has advocated the use of U.S. military force to root out cartel members and cocaine processing plants. And the press continues to portray the Colombian military as engaged in a selfless struggle against implacable drug lords.

The absence of perspective here is matched by a similar absence there. President Virgilio Barco's economic programs have been a disaster, with government assessments indicating that nearly 50 percent of the people (and three of every four persons in rural areas) live in "absolute poverty," and half of those in "absolute misery." Yet the drug war remains the only battle Barco is willing to wage. Just as the Reagan Administration has found the Colombia cartels a convenient distraction from domestic drug problems, so has the Colombian government been able to use the narcotics trade as a means of diverting attention from the country's other deadly and urgent problems.

KATE DOYLE AND MARK STATMAN

Kate Doyle and Mark Statman are journalists living in New York who recently returned from Colombia.

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

Women at the Wheel: The Stars Were Their Alibi

There has been a surprising commotion over the disclosure by former White House chief of staff Don Regan that important White House decisions have been consequent upon the analysis of Joan Quigley, a soothsayer in San Francisco, and that Nancy Reagan would never permit her husband to leave home without one or even two time-and-motion studies by this same soothsayer.

Much of the clucking is being done by people who themselves turn zealously to their favored horoscope. The United States retains, unusually for an advanced industrial society, about the same per capita level of religious superstition as Bangladesh. What one of Jimmy Carter's aides once referred to as the "abracadabra vote" is ample. It is scarcely news that the President is in the mainstream of popular American credulity. He has been nurtured in the same rich loam of folk ignorance, historical figment and paranormal intellectual constructs as millions of his fellow citizens. Nor has Reagan been shy in disclosing that he believes that Armageddon may well occur "in our lifetime," at which point the elect will defy elementary principles of thermodynamics, rise to heaven in a kind of celestial waterspout, leaving the sinners to burn below.

Regan, at one time the Secretary of the Treasury, reveals in his book that in his four years at that post he never once enjoyed a one-on-one colloquy with the chief executive and that in the devising of economic policy, "I was flying by the seat of my pants." In fact his pants were under strict orders from Mission Control, in the form of the Federal Reserve's Paul Volcker, who was the effective president for most of Reagan's tenure. Even so, there is certainly no reason to suppose that Quigley's counsel was inferior to that of analysts following more orthodox routes of economic prediction. As Regan himself well knows, the investment strategies of many successful Wall Street players follow what is called "random walk" patterns of speculation, which concede the superiority of chance, within a finite range of alternatives, to human intellection.

The image of two women, one of them peering into a crystal ball, guiding the policies of the United States, is irresistible in prompting coarse calumnies both on the termagant Nancy and on her pliant husband's abdication of executive responsibility. But reflection should excite a more kindly analysis. For most of human history leaders burdened with at least as many cares as Ronald Reagan have sought counsel from planets or entrails, and who now chastises the Emperor Augustus for his naïveté? Christian claims of "divine guidance" are too numerous and too frightening for individual citation.

Again, it is legitimate to suppose that Mrs. Reagan was invoking the disinterested advice of the planets to mask more subjective maneuvers. The press, mostly composed of men, have rejoiced in depicting her as a narrow-minded shrew, blindly devoted to her husband's well-being. But Michael Deaver's memoir, published last year, is a useful corrective. Deaver, not alone among Reagan's intimates in being now encumbered with a criminal conviction, was Reagan's vizier for the first term and recounted how he and Mrs. Reagan would plot to circumvent the ultrarightists urging their mad agendas on Ron. In the same vein, Regan reports that Nancy urged speedy dismissal of Labor Secretary Ray Donovan, who dwelt in the shadow of mob connections (as must all with a background in construction in New York), sought to banish Pat Buchanan and was equally keen for the Commander in Chief to boot William Casey out of the C.I.A. both before and after his brain seizure.

In these cases Mrs. Reagan's judgment was sound, and who will reprove her cry, when demanding that a passage on abortion be cut out of one of the President's speeches, "I don't give a damn about the right-to-lifers"? She apparently had Joan Quigley draw up Mikhail Gorbachev's chart, the better to understand the prophet of *glasnost*. To judge by such examples of their work as were released at the time of Watergate, it was probably superior in penetration to the profile of the Soviet leader prepared by the C.I.A.'s team of psychiatrists. It certainly seems to have persuaded Ron that here at last was a man he could do business with.

Had Mrs. Reagan invoked, as backing for her admirable counsel, the traditional "woman's intuition" she probably would have got nowhere. But to her husband's credulous mind the majesty of celestial guidance was irresistible. At least some astrology is surely just a strategy of female credentialing, alluring to phallocrats precisely because it borrows from the myth of the instinctual Eve. Besides, who knows who Quigley was talking to when she had Nancy on hold?

Astrology is entirely consonant with Reaganism, representing negation of the moral sense, abdication of initiative to the motions of the planets as parsed by the precise time and whereabouts of Ronald Reagan's birth. So astrology is therefore the twinkling penumbra of Reagan's incandescent belief in the motions of the "free market." Submission to the "laws" of this same utterly imaginary free market permits him and his fellow believers (a fair slice of the ruling class) to argue that intervention in the market's mysterious workings, to subsidize the needy or house the homeless, is to tinker with an inspired mechanism and court disaster.

Sosostris and Her Secrets

Vatic input—the question of who Joan Quigley was talking to—has had an interesting career in this century. During World War II the British, aware that Hitler retained astrological counsel, had their own soothsayer study the relevant charts to determine what sort of advice Hitler's astrologer was giving him.

A man who had been an editor at the *Sunday Express* in London during the war told my father that he was once contacted urgently by Lady Ironside, wife of General Ironside, one of Britain's senior military commanders. Lady Ironside

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confided that her husband was in the habit of consulting the astrological column in the *Sunday Express* before making important decisions but that the General had to make a particularly momentous choice by the coming Friday. Was there any way he could get an advance peek at the column? The big problem, the editor said later, was to figure out what to put in the column. Thousands of lives could depend on it. In the end they shoved in some ambiguous advice—"exhibit resolve, tempered with prudence" or something of that sort.

Joan Quigley has been stressing the scientific rigor of her own calculations, backed by a numbers cruncher with computer and astrology-specific software. My father was once told by a British Israelite (member of a sect holding that the lost tribes of Israel ended up in the U.K. and that the Great Pyramid holds the secrets of tomorrow) that some people believed you could figure out the future just by looking at the Great Pyramid. Ridiculous, he insisted, "why, with the sort of precise measurement involved, such calculations can take up to a week."

You Be the Judge

● "You did not mention in your comments in *The Nation* (although I'm sure it was in your thoughts) your disappointment that the antinuclear movement has also shown surprising disinterest in Mordechai Vanunu's cause. This failure to take a stand on his behalf casts a shadow on the entire antinuclear movement, at least in my eyes." ***Ruth Elizabeth Ramsey, Epworth, Ga.***

Ruth, you're entirely right. Back in the early 1980s, not long after the immense antinuke demonstration on June 12, 1982, vast sums from liberal foundations began seeking a sanctuary in the peace movement, which accordingly adopted the respectable posture most likely to allure such benefactors. People like Randall Forsberg declared that the time for mass action must yield to the hour in which the "experts" would be subjected to articulate persuasion from decorous peace tanks (like hers). If SANE/Freeze had any gump, let alone full-throated gumption, it would have pickets out in front of the Israeli Embassy or New York consulate, agitating on behalf of Vanunu.

● "I was reminded, upon reading your column about My Lai in the March 26 *Nation*, of the testimony I had heard in the extradition trial of the Argentine war criminal Carlos Suárez Mason on March 21. Suárez Mason, you will know, was commander of the First Army in and around Buenos Aires from 1976 to 1979, under whom some 5,500 people disappeared. When Alfonsín came to power, Suárez Mason fled to the United States, where justice finally caught him in the ridiculous suburb of Foster City last year. Anyway, by way of arguing that his position at the top of the chain of command should not necessarily make him responsible for crimes committed beneath him, Suárez Mason's attorney, James Riddet, maintained that blaming him was 'similar to arguing that William Westmoreland was responsible for the massacre at My Lai.'

"Arguing for Argentina, assistant U.S. Attorney Mark Zanides felt obliged to leap to the general's defense. 'The fact is, it was *not* the case in My Lai that murder was part of an ongoing pattern of organized abduction, torture and murder.' One almost felt a twinge of sympathy for the despicable Argentine general alone at his table." ***Paul Rauber, Berkeley, Calif.***

The three victims of torture suing Suárez Mason, under the alien torts act, were represented by the Center for Constitutional Rights. In the process of being deposed, Suárez Mason claimed he was broke and couldn't pay if he lost. In fact Suárez Mason had just paid his attorney $100,000. On April 25, C.C.R. won its $21 million suit against the general. The Nicaraguans should begin extradition proceedings for such *contra* death squad sponsors as Jeane Kirkpatrick, Elliott Abrams and the rest of the gang.

● "Re your Vietnam column. When I was in England in 1970 a member of the N.L.F. delegation in London gave me a two-page list of villages whose inhabitants had been massacred by U.S. troops. My Lai was one name on one of the pages. I don't remember if they were single or double spaced." ***Jeffrey Blankfort, San Francisco, Calif.***

Why keep raking up these distasteful memories, Jeffrey? On this subject, Kevin Buckley wants it to be known that the spadework for his investigation into Operation Speedy Express was done by Alexander Shimkin, who is still officially listed as missing in Vietnam. He was covering the fighting in Quangtri when a witness saw a grenade explode close to him.

● "Your readers should know that there is an American-based organization for Yesh Gvul, started by Israelis, involved in political education, sending financial support and organizing petitions. One such petition, from American Friends of Yesh Gvul, with 400 American names was recently printed in the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*. Contact Friends of Yesh Gvul, 1678 Shattuck Avenue, P.O. Box 6, Berkeley, CA 94709, or call (415) 848-9391." ***Diane Wolf, Seattle, Wash.***

● "I'm enclosing a clipping from *Commerce Business Daily* of January 11. The item is a notice of an intended purchase by the Air Force of some officers' holster kits to hold the new 9mm. Beretta pistol. The interesting thing about this purchase is the sizes being bought. Only seventy-eight of them are for officers whose waists are 30" to 32" in circumference, while 161 of them are for officers whose waists measure 38" to 40". The balance of 311 are for officers whose waists are 34" to 36". Scarcely svelte. This would appear to indicate that our military officers are not in fighting trim." ***Bill Feller, Frenchtown, N.J.***

Bill, if this sort of thing falls into enemy hands, there's no telling the consequences. Gorby and the high command of the Red Army will conclude that these swag-bellied officers are incapable of manning the ramparts of liberty and will swarm west in an orgy of rape and plunder.

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BELTWAY BANDITS.

DAVID CORN AND JEFFERSON MORLEY

■ Just Say No to the Drug War

"We have declared enough wars on drugs," Kurt Schmoke, the Mayor of Baltimore, told the National Conference of Mayors on April 25. He was only the latest to join a quietly growing movement to rethink the nation's unsuccessful war on drugs. A former state's attorney, Schmoke urged Congress to redirect antidrug efforts from interdiction to "fighting the problem of addiction as a public health matter." He suggested that Congress debate the decriminalization of narcotics as soon as the elections are over. The next day California Representative Pete Stark began circulating a "Dear Colleague" letter that gingerly proposed "a debate of the possible legislative alternatives" to drug prohibition, including "repeal and legalization."

The appeals from liberal Democrats like Schmoke and Stark have been more than matched by the decriminalization proposals of Richard Cowan, a conservative businessman from Dallas, and David Boaz, vice president of the libertarian Cato Institute. A new Washington-based organization, the Drug Policy Foundation, has launched a well-attended series of Capitol Hill seminars on alternative antidrug strategies.

"We want a re-evaluation of drug laws," says Arnold Trebach, a professor at American University who established the foundation. "We want to get the states to be free to choose their own drug laws, and we want people to start thinking about some sensible compromises on drug issues, such as the decriminalization of marijuana and maybe providing needles to addicts." Trebach says he now senses a "historic opening" in public thinking about the war on drugs. The realization that drugs are winning that war handily, he notes, is spreading across the political spectrum. But Trebach doesn't expect much change until after the elections. "The drug war extremists," he says, "are still dominant."

■ A Bush-League Tale

George Bush and his staff, in denying any connection to Oliver North's *contra* supply operation, are asking the public to swallow an incredible tale. Bush claims he didn't know of North's network until it was publicly disclosed in late 1986. Donald Gregg, Bush's national security adviser, says he was unaware of North's activity until Felix Rodriguez, an old C.I.A. buddy whom Gregg had recommended for counterinsurgency work in El Salvador, told him in August 1986 that he was also involved in the *contra* support scheme. (Gregg maintains he never passed that information on to his boss.) Yet on a tour of Central America in January of that year Gregg's assistant, Col. Samuel Watson, inspected *contra* bases and supply facilities in Honduras. On the El Salvador leg of the trip, he was escorted by Rodriguez. Watson claims Rodriguez did not mention his own role in aiding the *contras*, nor did the two even talk about the rebels' supply situation.

While taking a deposition from Gregg recently, a Christic Institute lawyer asked about a memorandum prepared by Bush's office and dated April 30, 1986, which notes that at a meeting the next day Rodriguez would brief Bush on the "resupply of the Contras." Gregg denied the subject was discussed at the session. The memo, he added with a tone of wonder, "baffles me to this day."

Gregg, a career C.I.A. man before joining the National Security Council staff, engaged in some theatrics last month to show he is confident he has escaped the tentacles of the scandal. At the annual White House Correspondents Association dinner Gregg, surrounded by journalists, greeted Rodriguez with a bear hug and exclaimed, "Señor, my success story!" One of the reporters who attended the function later snarled, "To do that, in that room, was the height of arrogance." A Bush presidency might mean the post of national security adviser for Gregg—or possibly Director of Central Intelligence.

■ Mort and the Janitors

Every evening as Washington professionals stream out of the modern office buildings that line K Street, they pass the cleaning crews streaming in. The janitors, most of them women and virtually all black or Latino, empty the trash and vacuum the corridors for $4.75 an hour, the D.C. minimum wage. Now, in a drive called Justice for Janitors, the Service Employees International Union is seeking to organize the city's 6,000 janitors. Some of the nation's richest real estate moguls, including Mortimer Zuckerman, the owner of *U.S. News & World Report*, are resisting.

The union wants a wage increase, to $6.50 per hour, as well as a hospitalization plan and sick pay for the workers, who currently receive no fringe benefits. According to organizer Jay Hessey, approximately 2,500 janitorial workers have signed up for the union since last October. Net operating income in D.C. office buildings has increased 115 percent over the past five years, he says, so building owners can meet the union's demands.

Not true, says Don Slatton, spokesman for the building owners' association. He claims that the union's proposal would increase rents by 15 percent and drive tenants to the suburbs. Besides, Slatton says, 90 percent of the janitors have other jobs, so they don't need fringe benefits. "Somebody will work evenings for a few months so they can buy a TV and then quit." Hessey says only 50 percent of workers have other jobs, and he estimates that a health care package would raise office rents by about 4 cents per square foot. "Slatton's just blowing smoke."

Union organizers have appealed to Zuckerman, who reportedly controls thirty-seven buildings in the area and has a reputation for fair-mindedness (perhaps owing to his on-again, off-again romance with Gloria Steinem).

"We're not talking about serious money for a guy like Zuckerman," Hessey says. "The money to meet the workers' demands isn't even going to be a blip on the screen for the man." Workers have left letters and leaflets at Zuckerman's posh residence in Georgetown, but Zuckerman, worth more than $200 million, has never responded. His property manager referred all inquiries to Slatton.

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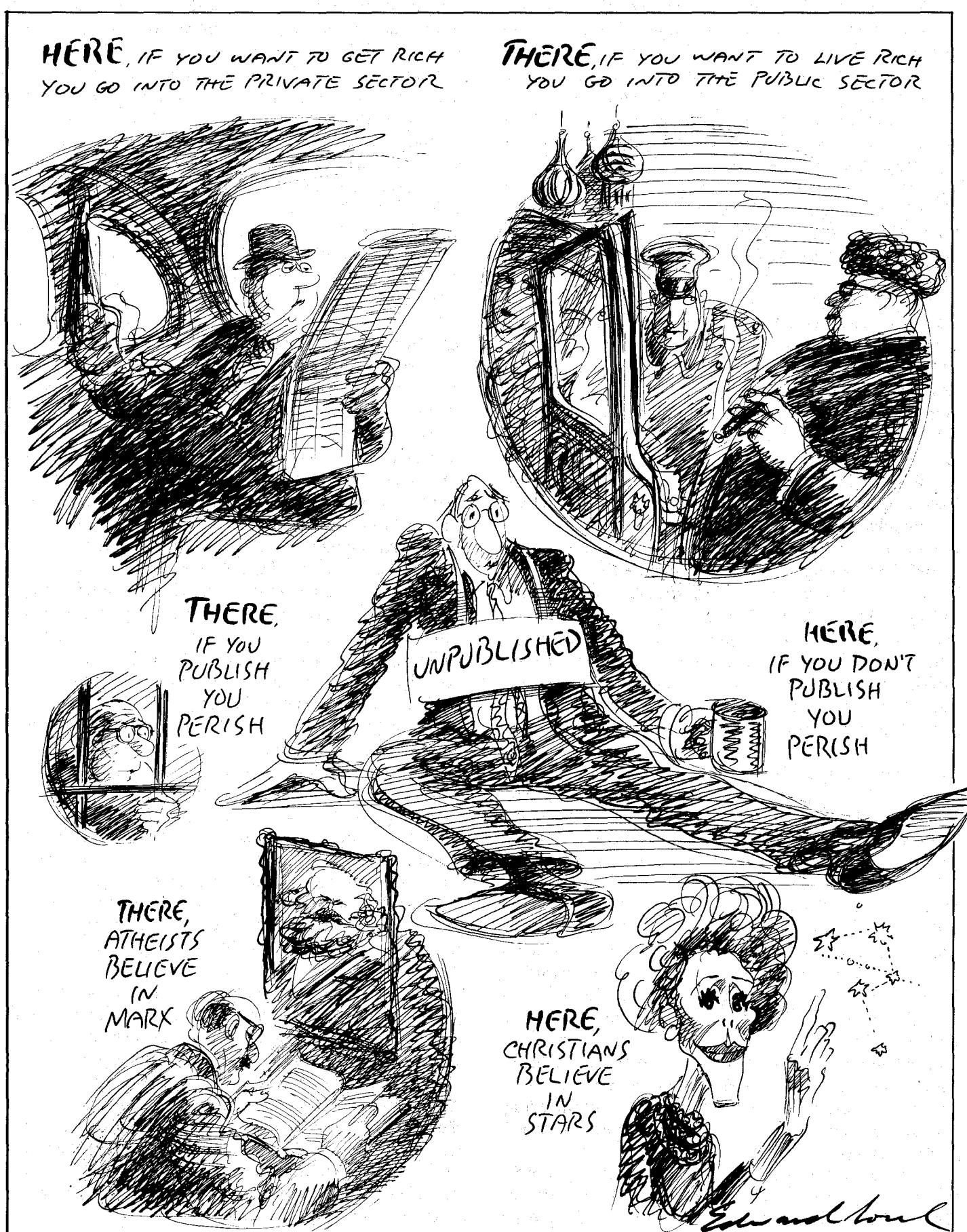
Irreconcilable Differences

EDWARD SOREL

HERE, IF YOU WANT TO GET RICH YOU GO INTO THE PRIVATE SECTOR
THERE, IF YOU WANT TO LIVE RICH YOU GO INTO THE PUBLIC SECTOR
THERE, IF YOU PUBLISH YOU PERISH
UNPUBLISHED
HERE, IF YOU DON'T PUBLISH YOU PERISH
THERE, ATHEISTS BELIEVE IN MARX
HERE, CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN STARS

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ARTICLES.

BUSTING THE BOOMLET

Why Nunn Isn't the One

DAVID CORN AND JEFFERSON MORLEY

Instead of "What does Jesse Jackson want?" the operative political question of the 1988 presidential campaign may now be, "What doesn't Jesse Jackson want?" One thing Jesse Jackson may not want—and may well be able to prevent—is Senator Sam Nunn serving as Michael Dukakis's running mate.

Nunn and Jackson are the polar opposites of the Democratic Party. Jackson advocates expanding the party's base and distinguishing it from the Republicans. Nunn, the Democrat from Georgia who chairs the Senate Armed Services Committee, is the great white hope of the party's small but vocal conservative faction. Nunn counsels that the Democrats' chances of capturing the White House in 1988 depend on winning back white male voters in the South and on closing the perceived difference between Democrats and Republicans.

Nunn, a current sweetheart of the Great Mentioner, is enjoying a vice-presidential boomlet, as Dukakis appears the likely nominee. Nunn has the blessings of many inside-the-beltway journalists and other regulars of the conventional-wisdom crowd. He has hinted that he might be interested in the number-two spot—if he could be Secretary of Defense as well. Thus far, Jackson has been carefully noncommittal on the subject of the vice presidency, for himself or anyone else.

Nunn would bring to the Democratic ticket a voting record that is remarkably pro-Reagan. According to *Congressional Quarterly*'s annual analysis, Nunn ranks as one of Reagan's most reliable votes among Democrats. During the Reagan years, his "presidential support" rating has ranged from 58 to 70 percent. In 1985 he edged out Howell Heflin for the dubious honor of the most consistent Democratic supporter of Reagan in the Senate. Nunn never provided much campaign help to other Democrats in Congress until the 1986 Senate elections—when, according to Georgia political observers, Nunn's operatives were gearing up for a possible presidential race.

In the past year, Nunn has won much praise for his successful challenge to the Reagan Administration's campaign to dump the "strict" reading of the 1972 antiballistic missile treaty and substitute its own implausible interpretation. By doing so, Nunn complicated the Administration's effort to proceed with certain Star Wars tests. But the glow created by that accomplishment has led many observers to overlook the rest of Nunn's record and classify him—erroneously—as some kind of moderate.

In fact, save for the ABM reinterpretation fight, Nunn is an outright Boll Weevil conservative, whose much-heralded "moderation" is a phenomenon of the Reagan years, during which the political spectrum shifted to the right. Nunn, who supported George Wallace in 1972, earned his Washington reputation in the late 1970s by proposing to revive the draft and build the neutron bomb. In 1977 he led the right-wing fight against Paul Warnke, President Jimmy Carter's arms control negotiator. (Which is perhaps why Carter, in a not-so-subtle slap at his fellow Georgian, has been touting Jackson as a strong vice-presidential nominee.)

Last year Nunn opposed a Democratic initiative to cut Star Wars funding from $4.5 billion to $3.7 billion. He voted against a moratorium on antisatellite weapons. He opposed a measure that would have compelled the Administration to stick to the limitations of the SALT II agreement. He has also backed the MX missile, cast a deciding vote in favor of chemical weapons and supported military aid to the *contras*. In 1986 he was one of eight Democrats to vote against a plus-inflation-only limit on the Pentagon's budget. He has not been a consistent supporter of Senate measures involving sanctions against South Africa, either.

Nunn's reputation as a moderate is the result of a few highly publicized occasions when he tried to split the difference between the Reagan Administration and Democratic positions. For example, he agreed to vote for *contra* aid in 1985 on the condition that the Administration place the *contras* under "civilian" control, curb their human rights abuses and establish a university for them. But once the White House got Nunn's vote, it never bothered to live up to its end of the deal, and Nunn never complained publicly.

The Iran/*contra* Congressional hearings last summer were an opportunity for Nunn to demonstrate his mastery of national security issues and independence from the Reagan Administration. Remember his performance? It's hard. Nunn was all but invisible.

On domestic issues, Nunn is just as conservative. Tax policy is perhaps the most important area in which the neoliberal and progressive wings of the Democratic Party can find common ground. Nunn, though, has often cast his lot with Reagan policy. In 1981 Nunn voted, along with most of his party, for the Reagan tax cuts. In 1982 he voted to retain the three-martini tax break by opposing the reduction of deductions for business meals. By 1985, Democrats in Congress had seen the error of their ways and proposed a minimum tax on corporations and the closing of many corporate loopholes. Nunn was one of four Senate Democrats to buck the party.

On civil rights, Nunn has apparently cared more about protecting the putative sensitivities of white voters in Georgia than demonstrating leadership. In 1975 he was one of thirteen Senators who voted against considering a renewal of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. In 1980 he cast a swing vote against a measure that would have strengthened laws against housing discrimination. In 1982, when the Voting Rights Act was up for extension again and facing Administration opposition, Nunn again equivocated, although final-

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ly he did vote for the bill. "It doesn't take any courage in Georgia in 1982 to get out in front on voting rights," says one well-connected Atlanta lawyer. "He shilly-shallied, and it should've been easy."

Nunn's votes on other domestic issues confirm his unwillingness to break with the agenda of the Reagan Administration. In 1983 he voted in support of a constitutional amendment to overturn *Roe v. Wade*; now Nunn supports Federal funding for abortion only in limited cases. He is not currently a co-sponsor of the Equal Rights Amendment. In 1985 he sided with various business lobbies and supported measures to decrease the power of both the Federal Trade Commission and the Consumer Product Safety Commission. He also voted to weaken the Environmental Protection Agency's enforcement of the Clean Water Act. In 1984 he opposed a modest child-care program. In 1986, Nunn voted to decrease the amount of Pell grants going to college students from low-income families.

The Atlanta attorney wonders, "Why is Nunn so popular in Washington? He takes the lee side on every issue." Another politically connected attorney in Atlanta says, "I'm constantly amazed by his reputation outside the state. He's a responsible, reliable, likable guy, but he never struck me as a person of great intellectual stature."

The argument fueling the "nudge Nunn" movement is that George Bush must be beaten at all costs—and if that takes Nunn, well, liberal Democrats should swallow hard. Ticket-balancing—ideological and regional—is an article of faith for most political pundits. But Nunn has not always advocated it. Two years ago he told Fred Barnes of *The New Republic* that merely putting a Southerner on the ticket won't help the Democrats much. "You have to have a philosophy in the ticket itself that is compatible," Nunn said, meaning compatible with white, conservative Southern males. Dukakis's apparent nomination ends that dream. And the question is, Would Nunn really help a Dukakis ticket all that much? Even his admirers concede Nunn is a stiff on the stump, and a ticket headed by Dukakis certainly doesn't need to be toned down. Nunn's past hostility to Democratic Party positions could easily be exploited by Bush. It's not easy to see Nunn playing well in California, which is crucial to Democratic hopes. And it's not obvious that he could guarantee the South, any more than mainstream Southerners such as Albert Gore Jr. or Dale Bumpers could—or perhaps Jackson [see Thomas Ferguson, "Whistling 'Dixie,'" May 14].

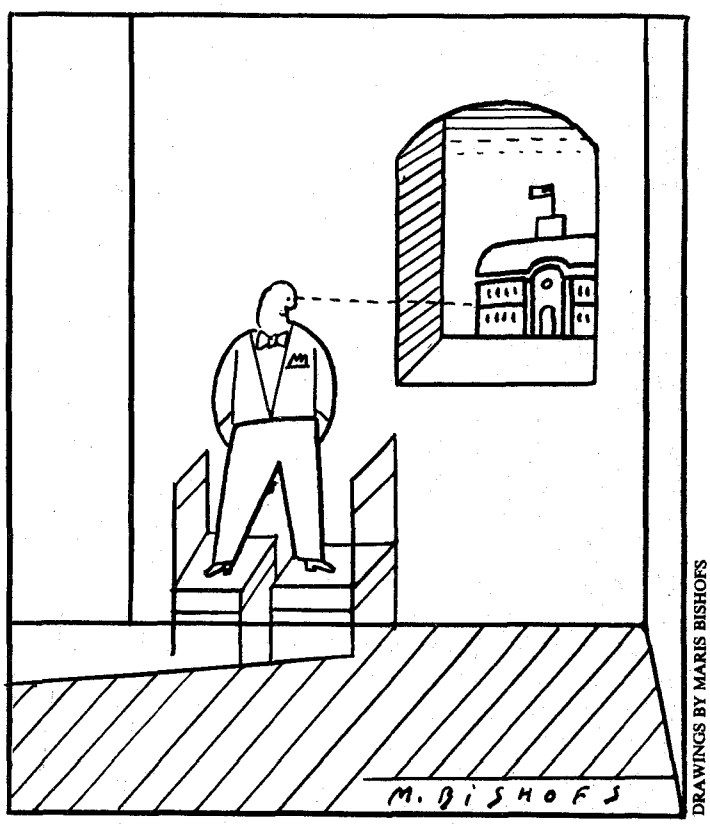
The most recent polls, which are just preliminary nationwide snapshots, not sophisticated analyses of potential electoral vote counts, indicate that a Dukakis-Jackson ticket could be competitive. *Time* found Dukakis-Jackson beating Bush and an unspecified Republican running mate by 47 to 42 percent. *U.S. News & World Report* found the same, while a *USA Today*/Cable News Network poll showed Bush beating Dukakis-Jackson 49 to 42 percent. There is not yet any poll data on how a Dukakis-Nunn pairing would fare.

The argument that Nunn would help the ticket begs the more important question of what Nunn would do once he was sitting in the West Wing of the White House. Nunn would be Dukakis's Zbigniew Brzezinski, a nominal Democrat pushing the opposition's agenda from within. The enthusiasm for Nunn among George Will, Roland Evans and Robert Novak and other conservative opinion leaders should give Democrats pause. They support Nunn because if he is on the Democratic ticket, their views will be championed regardless of who wins the election.

To win and govern effectively, Dukakis needs Jackson far more than he needs Nunn. The model for Democrats winning in the South was provided by the four Democrats who captured Senate seats in 1986. While Nunn's endorsement helped Wyche Fowler win in Georgia, Jackson's voter registration efforts throughout the region were far more important. If Jackson supporters stay home in 1988, Dukakis is finished in the South (and elsewhere), regardless of his running mate.

Jackson has indicated that he will campaign all-out for the ticket even if he is not on it. He has said that the nominee should be free to pick his own running mate. But Jackson, who has served the party far more loyally than Nunn, might subtly use his newfound influence to stifle any temptation to put Nunn on the ticket.

Jackson would not have to oppose Nunn publicly, although he may have earned the right to do so. Such an action could easily backfire and set off a distracting campaign tempest. But if, in the remainder of the primary campaign, Jackson begins to emphasize what the Democratic *ticket* should stand for, then the anti-Nunn message would be clear. Jackson wouldn't need to establish any kind of litmus test, merely emphasize the Democratic positions that were ratified during the primaries and that have broad public appeal: cuts in Star Wars spending, an end to *contra* aid, a pro-choice position on abortion, the repudiation of Reaganomics, more support for education and unwavering support for civil



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rights. Nunn would have no place on this platform. By defining the Democratic ticket in such a fashion, Jackson could issue the first pocket veto of the Dukakis Administration. □

WASHINGTON CANS NORIEGA

The Intervention That Misfired

MICHAEL MASSING

The Reagan Administration's effort to deliver a knockout blow to Panama's Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega has instead left it with a black eye. In the course of just a few months, the State Department has gone from issuing imperious demands for Noriega's ouster—"Noriega must leave, sooner or later, the sooner the better," in the words of Secretary of State George Shultz—to scrambling desperately to save face. The unfolding of Administration policy toward Panama says a great deal about the pitfalls of U.S. interventionism in Latin America and about the enduring inability of many liberals to recognize those dangers.

Viewed in retrospect, the campaign against Noriega seems remarkably arrogant. Washington freezes $50 million in Panamanian assets in the United States. It dispatches another 1,300 troops to the Canal Zone and contemplates a plot to kidnap Noriega. Pentagon officials talk openly about their efforts to foment a coup within the Panamanian military. Taken together, such actions represent no less than an effort to overthrow the government of Panama.

Such an exercise in gunboat diplomacy might be expected to elicit strenuous objections from American liberals. In this case, however, Democrats in Congress have only spurred the Administration on. In the Senate, the drive to oust Noriega has been spearheaded by Massachusetts dove John Kerry. In the House, a resolution urging tougher action won nearly unanimous Democratic support. Even Jesse Jackson got in on the act, sending Noriega a "Dear Manuel" letter urging him to step down.

The news media, too, jumped on the Dump Noriega bandwagon. "Time to Go," declared the headline atop a *Washington Post* editorial. Flora Lewis, rapturous over the Administration's aggressive policy, blithely asserted in *The New York Times* that "the question isn't whether to intervene; that happens inevitably. It is how and to what purpose." ABC News bestowed "Person of the Week" honors on Panamanian President Eric Arturo Delvalle, a onetime Noriega lap dog who, after breaking with the general, was elevated into a sort of Latin American Winston Churchill.

It's not hard to understand such sentiments. If ever a country seemed to merit U.S. intervention, it's Panama. Noriega ranks among Latin America's most wretched leaders, a man who would rather beggar his nation than relinquish a gram of his power. Noriega has essentially mortgaged Panama to Colombia's drug lords. Anyone questioning that relationship risks ending up like Hugo Spadafora, a leading Noriega critic who had his head cut off. Removing Noriega would both block a major drug artery to the United States and clear a large obstacle from the path to Panamanian democracy.

Certainly the idea of U.S. intervention was initially popular inside Panama. No question here of Washington acting against a nation's will. Outside the 15,000-strong Panama Defense Forces, Noriega seems to have few supporters. If anything, Panamanians wanted to see the United States become even more assertive. As a Panama Canal computer operator told *The Washington Post*, "We want the U.S. to do something; everybody does. I don't want any deaths, but I do want the Americans to help us. We don't have any weapons, and Noriega will only leave by force." Juan Sosa, Panama's Ambassador to Washington and a Delvalle loyalist, went so far as to call for a "commando-type of operation" to seize Noriega.

In seeking Noriega's removal, the Administration has, of course, been behaving in a transparently opportunistic manner. For years U.S. officials knew of Noriega's drug trafficking but did little to stop it—the general was simply too helpful in the fight against Nicaragua. Only now, with Noriega's usefulness at an end, has the White House finally acted. But so what? The Administration may have cozied up to this thug in the past, but if it has now finally seen the light, that would seem more deserving of praise than censure.

So all the elements for U.S. intervention appeared to be in place: a brutish dictator, an expectant population and a bipartisan consensus. So where did the Reagan approach go wrong? One clue comes from the various pronouncements that the Administration has issued on Panama. These extend far beyond the standard language of diplomacy. Thus White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater, expressing frustration at Noriega's tenacity, haughtily declared, "There are limits to our patience." This is Uncle Sam talking. The Panama crisis has revived an antiquated brand of *Yanqui* rhetoric that harks back to the days of the United Fruit Company and San Juan Hill. In their comments, Administration officials have displayed a crude sense of national egotism, an imperial belief that the United States has the right to dictate to its neighbors.

But strident pronouncements are the least of it. In the drive to make Noriega do its bidding, the Administration mounted a campaign of ever-escalating interference. First it froze all Panamanian assets deposited in U.S. banks. Then it withheld millions of dollars due to Panama from the operation of the canal. Next, President Reagan ordered U.S. corporations and individuals to halt all payments to Panama. These measures had an immediate and devastating effect on the Panamanian economy, leaving poor people without food, farmers without credit and banks without deposits. When Noriega refused to budge, Washington turned to more direct forms of action, seeking to stir up trouble for the general within his own armed forces.

Such big-stick measures have produced a growing back-

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lash in Latin America. At first, the nations of the region, content to see Noriega go, kept quiet about the U.S. campaign. But as the tactics grew more aggressive, traditional Latin concerns about national sovereignty rose to the surface. At a regional economic meeting held in late March in Caracas, Venezuela, twenty-two nations, ranging from Cuba to Chile, condemned U.S. policy toward Panama as "coercive." Some nations even raised the possibility of providing aid to Panama to help it withstand U.S. sanctions.

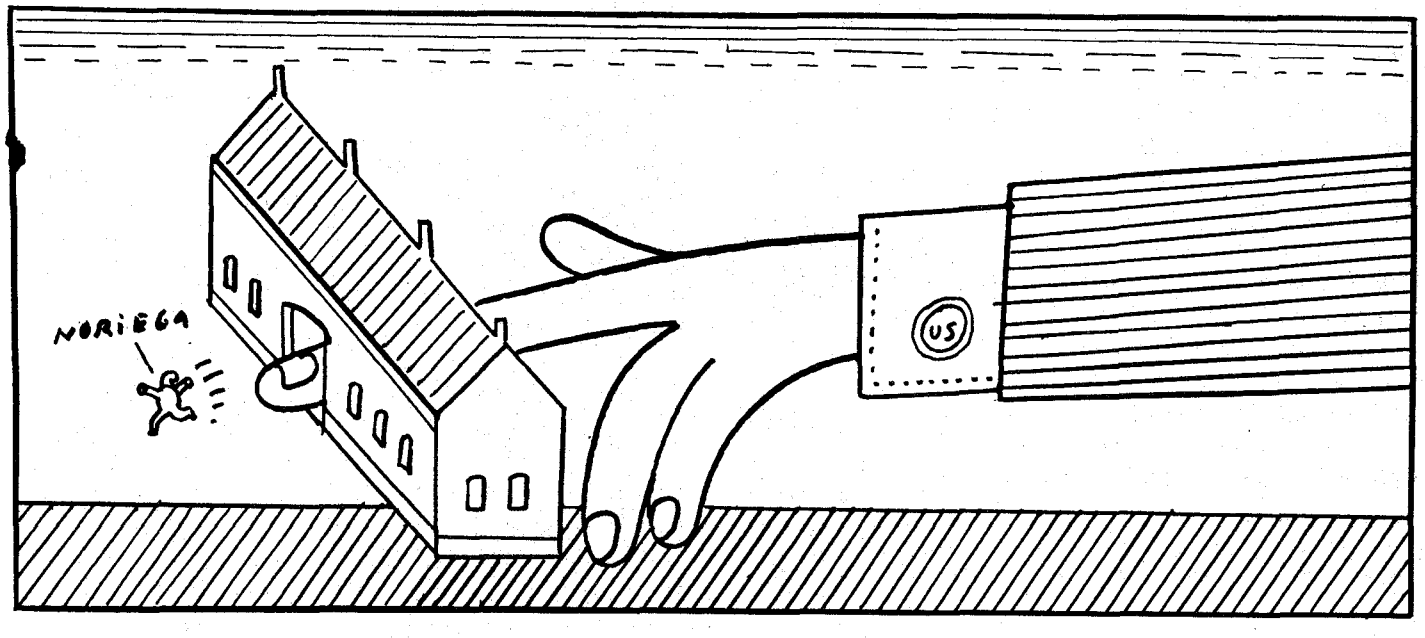
Within Panama itself, the U.S. approach has become increasingly unpopular. There's a great irony here. When Noriega first came under pressure from Washington, he tried to bolster his position by whipping up nationalist sentiment; few Panamanians were taken in. But what Noriega could not accomplish on his own, the Reagan Administration has done for him. In recent weeks, the National Civic Crusade—the broadly based opposition coalition—has suffered defections from some key groups disturbed by U.S. highhandedness. "For us, no recipe that comes from Washington has been favorable to the Panamanians," said one party leader.

In Congress, few such concerns have been raised. For Republicans, agitating against Noriega provides a convenient means toward a coveted end—retaining control of the Panama Canal. For Democrats, Panama affords an opportunity to sound tough about drugs and dictators at one and the same time. That, however, opens liberals to the charge of hypocrisy. Thus Charles Krauthammer, writing in *The Washington Post*, gleefully tweaked Democrats for insistently demanding Noriega's ouster while simultaneously objecting to U.S. intervention in Nicaragua. "Now that the entire American political spectrum has joined gaily in the overthrow business," Krauthammer wrote, "next time some pious windbag gets misty about respecting other peoples' sovereignty and about the glories of letting Central Americans decide their own future, ask him where Panama is."

This argument has a certain speciousness. There's a big difference between freezing a nation's assets, as the Administration has done in Panama, and blowing up its oil tanks, as it has done in Nicaragua. In one case, Washington has pressured a corrupt military chief to step down; in the other, it has financed a six-year war that has taken as many as 50,000 lives and caused $3.5 billion in economic damage. To equate the two, as Krauthammer does, is glib. Still, he has a point. Unless applied uniformly to governments of right and left, the principle of nonintervention loses its luster. If it's wrong for the United States to plot the overthrow of Nicaragua's government, it's equally wrong to plot the overthrow of Panama's.

Moreover, the Administration's strategy in Panama bodes ill for the future of democracy there. To the extent that the United States acts as the catalyst in removing one regime, it can influence the nature of its successor. Haiti is a good example. After years of backing Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier, the Reagan Administration—loudly proclaiming its support for democracy in Haiti—finally withdrew its support from the dictator. After Baby Doc's departure, however, Washington maintained close ties to his armed forces. The military was known to be involved in Duvalierist excesses, but the Pentagon continued to provide it with aid, training and moral encouragement. When Haiti finally held an election, last November, the army and the paramilitary Tonton Macoutes went on a rampage, leaving more than thirty people dead and the prospects for Haitian democracy a shambles.

A similar situation could develop in Panama. In an effort to incite Panama's military officers against Noriega, Washington has lavished praise on the Panama Defense Forces. George Shultz has called them "a strong and honorable force that has a significant role to play, and we want to see it play that." This is absurd. The senior ranks of the Panamanian military are layered with corruption. Many officers receive payoffs from local businesses, share in multimillion-dollar business deals, rake in profits from narcotics trafficking. In fact, the Florida grand juries that indicted Noriega for drug dealing also wanted to name Panama's armed forces, as an institution, but the State Department—worried about offending its friends in the military—intervened at



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the last moment. The United States seems less interested in reforming Panama's military than in removing one troublesome military man.

So what is to be done in Panama? Is there any alternative to the current interventionist approach? Some might argue for a strictly hands-off, turn-a-blind-eye policy. But such an isolationist strategy is impractical. The presence in Panama of the U.S. Southern Command, with approximately 10,500 troops, inevitably makes the United States a key player there. So does our historical involvement with the Panama Defense Forces; most of its officers are U.S.-trained. As one Panamanian lawyer told *The Washington Post*, "The gringos for 20 years have given arms and money to the military and created this monster."

Last week, the Reagan Administration indicated that it was close to a deal in which it would drop all drug-related charges against Noriega in exchange for his speedy departure. By engaging in such bargaining, of course, Noriega might simply be trying to delay stepping down. Even if the deal does go through, though, the Administration is simply compounding its original error—attempting to negotiate Panama's future in a unilateral fashion.

Clearly, an entirely new approach is needed. Rather than seek the abrupt removal of Noriega, however, the United States should adopt a less drastic, more gradualist strategy, one based not so much on intervention as disengagement. Through such an approach, Washington would withdraw its longtime support from Panama's military, then let events take their own course. Disengagement would mean issuing statements about Panama without seeming to dictate to it. It would mean imposing some sanctions on the country, but not at the cost of destroying its economy. It would mean cutting off military aid to Panama but not dispatching the marines there. Finally, it would mean speaking out against abuses by military officers without driving them to mount a coup.

A policy of disengagement might enable General Noriega to hang on to power longer than would otherwise be the case. But such a strategy, by leaving Panama's political future to the Panamanians themselves, would provide a much more solid foundation for the development of democracy. And, not least, it would leave intact the principle of nonintervention. □

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DISCRIMINATION ON TRIAL

HIV Carriers Have Rights Too

MARK GEVISSER

John Doe, a black gay man in his 30s, lives in Southern California and is an alcoholic. John Doe, a 27-year-old white pharmacist, is from Westchester County, New York. They share the same reason for their legal anonymity: Both are asymptomatic carriers of the AIDS virus, HIV, and in the squall of hysteria whipped up around the AIDS epidemic both claim to be victims of discrimination—the first by being shut out of a rehabilitation program, the second by being refused a job. In two crucial precedent-setting trials, the John Does have pressed charges against the hospitals they say discriminated against them.

If the California John Doe wins his suit in U.S. District Court, it will extend the Civil Rights Rehabilitation Act to cover not only infectious diseases like AIDS but HIV seropositivity as well. If the Westchester Doe wins his suit in New York, it will uphold the state's official interpretation, signed by Governor Mario Cuomo, that "discrimination based on AIDS is prohibited by the state human rights law," and will extend this coverage to all those who test positive for HIV antibodies.

The Federal trial will begin at the end of this month; the New York case, against the Westchester County Medical Center of Valhalla, is currently being heard by the state's Division of Human Rights, Assistant Westchester County by Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, the national gay legal service. His attorney, Columbia University faculty member Mark Barnes, is attempting to prove that the pharmacist is a victim of job discrimination "aided and abetted" by the medical center's breaching of its own confidentiality policy.

Barnes's client puts it more bluntly: "They took away the one thing I had that wasn't directly affected by the whole ordeal of being seropositive—the fact that I could get up in the morning, that I could do my job and do it real well and be content. It was taking away my one last bite of life. Here they were stomping on someone who was already down."

Doe tested positive for HIV in 1985 at the Westchester County Medical Center, his local hospital (he has remained in good health to date). About a year later, the center offered him a job as hospital pharmacist, a position he had sought for more than three years. As part of the application process he underwent a routine physical at the center's employee health clinic, and Doe describes his emotional state as he entered this examination: "I was in deliberation

Mark Gevisser, a writer living in New York City, is a member of ACT UP, the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power.

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about. . . . What am I supposed to tell them about my seropositivity? I realized that they shouldn't have this information. I almost had a gut feeling that it was inappropriate for me to be put in a position to divulge it. I didn't want to break the confidentiality that had been set up to protect me in the first place."

That confidentiality was broken anyway: A nurse at the employee health clinic who had previously worked at the medical center's infectious disease clinic recognized him as someone who had come in a year and a half previously for HIV testing. While Doe was having routine blood and urine tests, she allegedly pulled the prospective employee's HIV file and handed it to the examiner, Dr. Robert Abdoo.

"I heard someone calling after me," Doe testified in court. "When I turned around there was Dr. Abdoo standing . . . alongside [the] nurse, who had a very smug expression on her face at the time. And she said that the doctor hasn't quite finished with you and would like to see you in the examination room again. . . . She looked kind of like the cat who ate the canary."

When Doe was asked why he had not volunteered information about his seropositivity, he replied, "Those results had no bearing on my employability as a registered pharmacist at the medical center."

The doctor's response to this, according to Doe, was, "What if you inadvertently bled on the medication?" Doe was dumbfounded. "I tried to persuade him that any pharmacist that bled on any medication would professionally not dispense the medication to begin with. He said that . . . he considered me to be an ARC [AIDS-related complex] diagnosis and that there was no way that he would give the O.K. for a pharmacist with ARC to begin employment at the medical center."

In the courtroom, the plaintiff Doe has faced the same victimization to which he had been subjected in the examination room. The defense attorney, Peter Meisels, has focused on Doe's alleged "lack of veracity and candor," suggesting that because he withheld the results of his HIV test (which he was not legally required to divulge), he would be an irresponsible employee. Meisels has also repeatedly used Doe's real name in court, despite a caution from the judge.

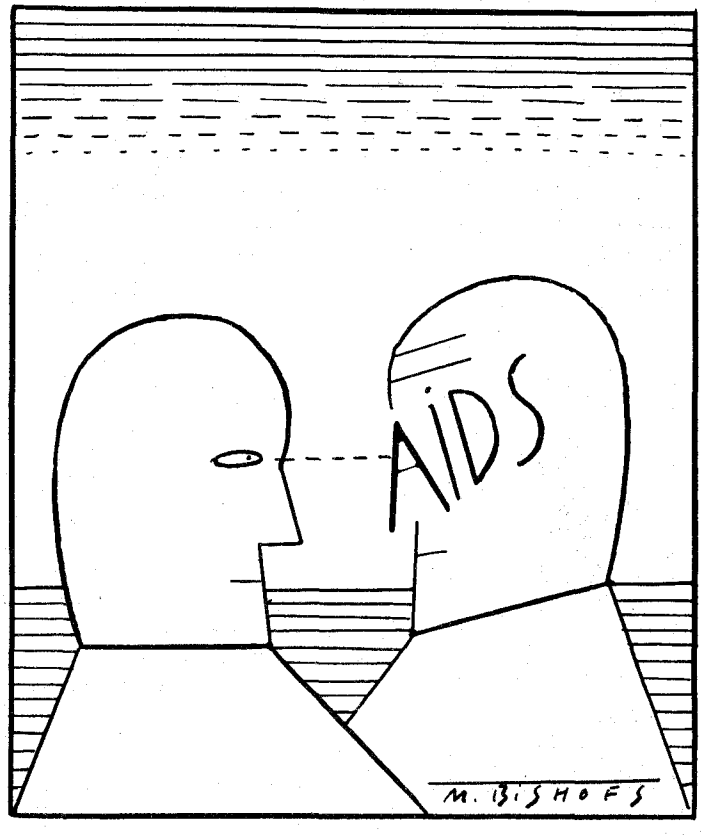
A spokeswoman for the hospital said the case was "open and shut": Doe was not hired because he never completed the application process. However, in a letter to the state's Division of Human Rights, Assistant Westchester County Attorney Marguerite Wiess insisted that a seropositive pharmacist, even working under the aseptic conditions of a pharmacy, would present some danger to patients. In court the hospital continued making this argument despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, and this stand, suggests counsel Barnes, could be its downfall.

Charles Eisnaugle, who conducted the Division of Human Rights' investigation into the allegation, says that "the chief of epidemiology at the Centers for Disease Control provided us with reassurance that it was simply unrealistic to bar a seropositive pharmacist from employment in his specialty." And Barnes brought before the court a series of illustrious witnesses who corroborated this, including New York City Deputy Commissioner of Epidemiology and Prevention Services Dr. Stephen Schultz and the vice president of medical operations for the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, Dr. Robert Cohen.

Cohen submitted to the court the stated policy of the Health and Hospitals Corporation, which applies to every employee in all public hospitals in New York City. This policy forbids the screening of employees for HIV as a condition for employment, and very strictly upholds the maintenance of seropositive employees' confidentiality.

In response, the defense brought forward Dr. Zalmen Arlin, chief of neoplastic diseases at the Westchester County Medical Center, who said he did not want a seropositive pharmacist in his department, preparing parenteral drugs for patients who already have weakened immune systems. He emphasized, however, that he saw no problem with Doe being hired by the main pharmacy. But the medical center's director of pharmacy, Diane Babiar, insisted that she had concerns about a seropositive pharmacist working anywhere with needles: "Accidental needle sticks might happen," she said, recounting that she had once stuck herself, bled, and realized it only a few minutes later.

Both these viewpoints are in strong contradiction to that of the hospital's Dr. Gary Wormser, chief of the infectious disease unit and a nationally renowned authority on AIDS transmission. In *The New England Journal of Medicine*, Wormser published a 1985 study concluding that, in laboratories, "isolation procedures currently required for AIDS are adequate and . . . the risk of transmission within hospitals is low." These procedures, which require the use of laminar-flow safety cabinets, mechanical pipettes, gowns, gloves and disinfectants, are identical to those used within a hospital pharmacy when preparing parenteral solu-



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tions. The study adds that "needlestick exposure appears to provide little additional risk of HTLV-III (HIV) exposure."

Once told that his HIV status rendered him ineligible for the pharmacy job, Doe approached Wormser indirectly through a physician acquaintance. The AIDS specialist was reportedly appalled at the hospital's action and said that the facility already had seropositive people in its employ. He promised to look into the situation but never got back to Doe.

The pharmacist recounted in court that he subsequently spoke anonymously to Wormser, after the doctor had given a presentation on AIDS: "I confronted him with the following question: 'Dr. Wormser, does an HIV-seropositive pharmacist pose any kind of threat to himself, to the people with whom he works, to other hospital staff or patients in any hospital pharmacy . . . [or] setting?' And his answer was, 'Absolutely not.'" This interchange, reported in the local press, which has covered the trial voraciously, has yet to be denied by Wormser.

Under the leadership of Wormser, the Westchester County Medical Center has applied to become an AIDS treatment center, part of a statewide network to coordinate care of AIDS patients. The New York State Department of Health's AIDS Institute says that the medical center's application is on hold pending disposition of the discrimination case. New York AIDS activists are justifiably concerned. On February 20 the New York City-based ACT UP (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power) demonstrated outside the hospital. "How can an institution which illegally and willfully discriminates against seropositive people in violation of New York State law be given extra tax dollars to fund their treatment of AIDS patients?" asks Barnes.

At the Federal level, the Department of Health and Human Services is conducting its own investigation into the medical center. If the investigation determines that there was discrimination in violation of U.S. law, the substantial Federal funding the hospital receives could be cut off.

Health and Human Services is also conducting an investigation into Centinela Hospital in Torrance, California, a private institution that receives Federal funding. The California John Doe claims this hospital rejected him from a rehabilitation program because of his seropositivity.

Before Doe was admitted to the drug and alcoholism rehabilitation program at Centinela, he was told that he must submit to an HIV test. He was led to believe, he says, that he would be allowed to stay whether or not he tested positive. When the results came back three days later, an ill-informed psychiatrist, seemingly unqualified to provide post-test counseling, called him into his office and reportedly said, "I have bad news for you; you have AIDS."

The doctor explained to Doe, an alcoholic desperately in need of treatment, that he would have to be excluded from the program. "It's a closed unit," the psychiatrist reportedly informed him, and it would not risk his sharing the swimming pool and eating utensils with other inpatients.

Doe, even more desperate now that he had been informed he had AIDS, asked, "Well, what if I kill myself?" The psychiatrist allegedly replied, "Well, I guess the hospital would be liable." Led to believe that he had a socially stigmatized fatal disease on top of severe alcohol addiction, Doe felt so abandoned, so shaken up, that when he finally found a rehabilitation program that did not demand an HIV test, he was too unstable to see it through and left almost immediately. It has taken an intensive session of private counseling to convince him that, even though he is HIV-

ACTION ON AIDS

If the age of darkness that helped spawn the AIDS crisis began when Ronald Reagan took office, then the light began to shine again in earnest last month. On April 29, Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, told Representative Ted Weiss's Subcommittee on Human Resources and Intergovernmental Relations that resource shortages were "almost exclusively" the reason several promising experimental drugs had not entered clinical trials. Hours later, hundreds of angry AIDS activists across the country took to the streets to inaugurate ACT NOW, a nine-day national action organized by ACT UP, the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power.

Fauci, who said he had been granted scarcely 10 percent of the AIDS research staff he requested, admitted what AIDS activists have known for years—ACT UP was formed around the very issue of Federal laggardness in drug testing and approval. The ACT NOW demonstrations, which spread across America, called once again for the development of the many experimental drugs still languishing due to inadequate funding.

At New York's City Hall, ACT UP joined forces with ADAPT (Association for Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment), an intravenous-drug-user support group. This was the first time that i.v. drug users had organized politically and voiced demands for AIDS treatment and prevention services. Later the same week, ACT UP members went to Shea Stadium to hand out condoms and unfurl banners proclaiming "No Glove, No Love" and "Don't balk at safer sex!" Other rallies called for better AIDS treatment for prisoners and for ending the use of placebos in drug trials. The action culminated in a national day of protest, with activists in fifty cities marching to government offices and health care institutions. More than 15,000 converged on Sacramento alone.

Sunshine on the streets and, finally, a ray of light in Washington. Congress is beginning to ask the right questions, and officials are beginning to respond a little more honestly. Finally, too, the Surgeon General's much-vaunted AIDS booklet is being mailed to every home in America. Federal indifference to AIDS has been close to criminal. Dr. Anthony Fauci knows it, Ted Weiss knows it and thousands of demonstrators across the country know it. —M.G.

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positive, he doesn't have AIDS.

As for the upcoming Federal court actions, "We have a good chance of winning the trial," says Doe's counsel, Mickey Wheatley, Lambda staff attorney for AIDS discrimination. "Hopefully, we'll establish the narrow principle that a hospital policy of excluding seropositives violates Federal law, and the broad one that seropositives are protected by Federal civil rights law."

Part of that body of law is laid out in the Federal Rehabilitation Act, which forbids handicap-based discrimination in any institution—schools, hospitals or programs—that receive Federal funding. Congress, by overriding President Reagan's veto of the Civil Rights Restoration Act this year, has reiterated that for any part of an institution to receive Federal funding, the entire institution must follow Federal regulations. Wheatley therefore maintains that even if the rehabilitation program at Centinela had been privately funded, it must obey Federal law.

Under the civil rights statute, a "handicap" can fall under one of three categories: actual handicap; a history of handicap; or, the most relevant category when dealing with AIDS, perceived handicap (if the person is seen by others as impaired). Once it has been determined to which of the three categories a plaintiff belongs, the next step is to determine, in the case of contagious diseases, whether he or she presents a risk of spreading the condition.

In 1986, over the objections of its civil rights division, the Justice Department issued an advisory opinion that HIV carriers, whether asymptomatic or AIDS-diagnosed, are not covered under the civil rights laws if the discrimination was based on fear of contagion. Two important cases decided since, however, have effectively shot down this opinion.

In ***Arline v. Nassau County School Board*** (1986) the Supreme Court ruled that action motivated by fear of contagion is handicap-based discrimination. The plaintiff had had a history of tuberculosis, and was therefore fired from her job as a teacher. She was considered to be in the category of "history of handicap" and the school board was instructed to reinstate her. Once this precedent had been set, it took last December's landmark case of ***Chalk v. Orange County School Board*** to apply the law to persons with AIDS, who, because they are presently ill, fall into the category of "actual handicap": The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit ordered that Vincent Chalk, a teacher with AIDS, be reinstated. Now, because that case determined that in occupations where contact is only casual AIDS does not present a threat of contagion, the law effectively protects people with ARC as well as AIDS.

The new Civil Rights Restoration Act strengthens this position even further, for it reaffirms the ***Arline*** decision. There has, however, been no legal challenge to the Justice Department's opinion that asymptomatic seropositivity, as in the John Doe cases, is outside the ambit of the civil rights laws. In both the ***Arline*** and ***Chalk*** decisions, the courts specifically and pointedly left open the status of those people who fall into the category of "perceived handicap." And this is the importance of the John Doe trial in California.

If the two John Doe suits are successful, the rights of HIV

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seropositives, both AIDS-diagnosed and asymptomatic, will be bolstered legally and symbolically. Whatever the outcome, a major victory has already been won—the gaping holes in the system of confidentiality surrounding testing have been exposed. An important point has been scored against those in favor of mandatory testing: "The behavior of Centinela," says Mickey Wheatley, "proves just how dangerous and irresponsible obligatory testing can be."

The last word on HIV testing belongs to the Westchester John Doe. "Back then I would've said, 'You have to know.' Today I would tell anybody not to go *near* a testing facility." □

Perestroika

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

to expect the offensive?" and observes:

> For the bureaucracy, of course, the situation has become unexpectedly complex and not quite favorable—they have lost control of a number of the supreme key positions, while the people have become excited because of *glasnost*—and it would be risky to return them openly and directly to the former state of indifference and apathetic obedience. Conflicts, whose outcome is difficult to predict, are possible. It is better to wait. For the second time in the 20th century there is a curious situation of its kind in Russia, "of duality of power," when neither side is ready to start a decisive offensive and is waiting for its hour, limiting itself to mild attacks only for reconnoitering the situation. It would be naïve of us to think that the bureaucracy (as a social force) is wasting time. To give the bureaucracy its due, it has already found the weakest points of *perestroika* and, without publicizing it, and having cautiously camouflaged its plans with phrasemongering about the proclaimed reforms (among other things, substituting the economic methods of management for the administrative ones), is preparing a broad offensive. I think that they [bureaucrats] have unerringly chosen the right line of attack.
>
> They obstruct, with all possible means, the rapid growth of the quantity of products and services which, under individual and cooperative labor, could rapidly become cheaply available after some time, according to the laws of the market economy.

Why is this so? Because the bureaucracy understands perfectly well that the issue of prices is one of the most contradictory, dangerous and sensitive for *perestroika*. The economy needs radical price reforms and cannot progress without them, because such change in the Soviet Union must encompass not simply consumer goods but also commodity and industrial prices. At the same time, price reforms would inevitably raise the cost of living for the people, and when that happens a dangerous anti-*perestroika* climate could be formed and exploited. There are economists who, insensitive to this horrible dilemma facing Gorbachev, his advisers and supporters, are impatient with the delays in price reforms. On purely economic grounds they are right, because the distorted price structure is greatly responsible for many of the monetary problems of the country.

The economic battles, though, have hardly begun. It is the political battles that are preoccupying the antagonists as well as the protagonists of *perestroika*, and those are still being fought more or less around the central issue of de-Stalinization. In degree the vehemence of the anti-Stalinists and pro-Stalinists is almost equal—only the Stalinists are more threatening, and they appear to be operating from points close to the centers of power.

The Stalinists' confidence was very strikingly demonstrated by their attacks at the beginning of this year on Mikhail Shatrov and his new play, *Onward . . . Onward . . . Onward!*, the text of which was published in the January issue of *Znamya*. The manner in which the polemic against *Onward* and Shatrov was promoted, and some of the people and institutions involved in doing so, are reflective of the current political struggle.

The editor in chief of *Pravda*, Viktor Afanasiev, launched the attack against Shatrov at a meeting of media editors with Gorbachev on January 8. Although Gorbachev did not respond to Afanasiev's remarks about Shatrov, and in no manner encouraged him, Afanasiev published a critique of the play in *Pravda* two days later. Since the newspaper is the organ of the Central Committee, the opponents of *perestroika* considered the attack an official signal to go after Shatrov's scalp. *Pravda* also published a long critique by a group of historians. The floodgates were open, and other publications followed the lead. The timing and occasion of the campaign was not without significance. Gorbachev was perceived to be in a weak position after the compromises of the November 2 speech and the ouster of Moscow party chief Boris Yeltsin, reported to be one of his closest allies and a key supporter of *perestroika*. And the attack had been pointedly inaugurated, in Gorbachev's presence, by Afanasiev, an editor who is supposed to be a spokesman for the General Secretary's (or at least for the Central Committee's) policies.

Why this fury with Shatrov? Because his new play raises a basic question lying at the roots of de-Stalinization and *perestroika*, and answers it in a manner that touches the raw nerves of those imbued with Stalinist consciousness. In *Onward*, stretching his usual, careful documentary style about episodes in Soviet history to its maximum limit, Shatrov clearly indicates that the assumption of power by Joseph Stalin was neither inevitable nor predetermined, that it was made possible only by defying and ignoring Lenin's last testament, in which he had urged that Stalin be removed from the post of General Secretary. According to Shatrov, history has confirmed that the neglect of Lenin's will had tragic consequences for the nation. For the masses, this message, conveyed from a public stage, is still a highly revolutionary one, notwithstanding the intellectual debate about this issue that has raged for the past three years.

Naturally, Stalinists, neo-Stalinists and conservatives cannot accept such conclusions. Hence their anger with Shatrov, which also signifies the great divide between them

Dev Murarka, a longtime journalist in Moscow, is the author of Gorbachov: The Limits of Power, *published in France and recently in England (Century Hutchinson).*

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and the essence of Gorbachev's *perestroika* objectives.

The attacks on Shatrov aroused the protagonists of *perestroika* to action. Dmitry Kazutin praised the play's text in *Moscow News* on January 10. On February 4, in *Sovetskaya Kultura*, the philosopher Anatoly Butenko ridiculed Shatrov's critics for objecting to his negative appraisal of Stalin. But even Butenko failed to address the real issue: that a play was being condemned for showing political independence in thinking, thus undermining the basis of *glasnost* and democratization. An alarmed intelligentsia soon came to recognize this. On February 29, *Pravda* carried a sharply worded letter signed by eight of the most highly respected members of the Soviet theater, among them the head of the Theater Workers Union, Kirill Lavrov; actor Mikhail Ulyanov; and directors Mark Zakharov, Oleg Efremov and Georgi Tovstonogov, strongly condemning the dirty, Stalinist nature of the campaign against Shatrov and his play. *Pravda* could add only a weak rejoinder of its own, barely able to justify its conduct in the affair.

After the intelligentsia's angry letter in *Pravda*, the media campaign against Shatrov died down. Although the furor curtailed nationwide staging of his play, nevertheless the outcome of the exchange was an important victory for Shatrov and the protagonists of *perestroika*—all the more so because it was won with outspoken anti-Stalinist arguments. The premiere of *Onward* took place in the provincial city of Tomsk on the evening of March 13.

Ironically, on the day that *Onward* opened, *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, as ever noisily Stalinist, published what amounted to an opposition manifesto, its philosophy and phraseology borrowed from the old arsenal: snide anti-Semitism, a denunciation of cosmopolitanism, and strident nationalism. The attack took the form of a pagelong letter from a reader, a Leningrad chemistry teacher, Nina Andreyeva. In the emotionally charged letter, titled "I Cannot Betray My Principles," the writer unblushingly expressed a hard-core Stalinist attitude:

> Included in the formula of "personality cult" are the industrialization, the collectivization and the cultural revolution which made of our country a great world power. All this is questioned. It has gone so far that the "Stalinists" (in which category anyone could be included) are asked to repent.

The *Sovetskaya Rossiya* manifesto crystallized the need for the friends and supporters of Gorbachev and *perestroika* to stand up and be counted. The whole intellectual, moral and political climate in the Soviet Union changed dramatically on the morning of April 5, when *Pravda*'s rebuttal, a pagelong article with the telltale title "Principles of Perestroika: Revolutionary Ideas and Actions," hit the news kiosks. It was as if a heavy fog had lifted. After months of the rising crescendo of a Stalinist chorus directed at undermining Gorbachev and his policies, a chorus seemingly unstoppable under the umbrella of *glasnost*, the Soviet leader had hit back hard at his opponents in a decisive manner, and at a crucial stage.

The *Pravda* article was an authoritative, bitter and savage attack on Stalinist and conservative opponents and sabo-

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teurs of *perestroika*. The issues raised in the *Sovetskaya Rossiya* letter, it stated, "can be described as nothing less than an ideological platform, a manifesto of the forces opposed to *perestroika*." *Pravda* concluded testily that "the [*Sovetskaya Rossiya*] article is an attempt at revising Party decisions on the sly." The unsigned nature of the *Pravda* piece gave it the authority of a declaration by the Politburo and the Central Committee. The informed guesses were that the author was Alexander Yakovlev, a high-ranking member of the Politburo in charge of ideology. The important thing was that the article had the endorsement of a majority of Politburo members.

Gorbachev could hardly have been surprised by the *Sovetskaya Rossiya* attack. The mounting evidence of opposition to his policies was everywhere. His cause was no longer served by denying, ignoring or ridiculing the existence of opposition. Letters were openly being sent to the supporters of *perestroika*, such as one received by the playwright Alexander Gelman, warning him, "Your Gorbachev will be dethroned yet for his unlimited *glasnost*." As Nikolai Shmelyev, a celebrated advocate of liberal economy, put it in his essay "New Dangers," which appeared in the April issue of *Novy Mir*:

> Involuntarily the idea thrusts itself upon one, that a silent conspiracy against *perestroika* can form in the country or has already formed, in which the interests of an operative section of the local leaders and a number of central departments have gelled together. Specially frightening is the position of some of the central press organs, which, if not openly, then by means of silence factually support this opposition.

In this context the conduct of Valentin Chikin, the editor in chief of *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, appointed to the job just before the Twenty-seventh Party Congress in February 1986, deserves special attention. Chikin, by all accounts, is an ambitious Stalinist adventurer who has wormed his way into the top hierarchy of Soviet journalism with the support of some of the higher-ranking party leaders. During the past year under his editorship, *Sovetskaya Rossiya* has become the flagship of Stalinism in the Soviet media. Before the Andreyeva concoction, *Sovetskaya Rossiya* published several articles defaming anew many of the old Bolshevik leaders murdered by Stalin. A polemic against Leon Trotsky, published last September, had the dubious distinction of being one of the dirtiest pieces of political writing to be published in any Soviet newspaper since the death of Stalin; it was full of lies and anti-Semitism.

Furthermore, Chikin's bold and open Gorbachev-baiting played a significant role in the behind-the-scenes struggle between Stalinists and anti-Stalinists. On January 8, Gorbachev met with a group of senior media people in the Kremlin. At the meeting, Chikin took the floor and, confident of the Stalinists' resurgent strength, engaged in a series of barbed exchanges with Gorbachev, which exposed basic differences in their political outlook. For instance, at one point Chikin said that it was difficult to find people to dispatch to the provinces to report on the progress of *perestroika*. Gorbachev shot back: " 'Dispatch' is an expression from administrative command [i.e., Stalinist] methods. 'Invite' them." An unfazed Chikin then attacked Gorbachev's anti-Stalinist position and his commitment to *glasnost* about the Soviet past. Gorbachev retorted: "We have courageously analyzed our errors. Has there been such an analysis since Lenin—a comprehensive, balanced analysis? We must build and renew socialism, stir our society, using all the sap supplied by the roots that go deep back into our history, particularly socialist history, lopping off all the negative elements from the 1930s and 1940s and from the recent period of stagnation."

What happened soon afterward had been foreshadowed in this clash between Gorbachev and Chikin. It was the first, though still cautious, signal that Gorbachev was beginning to revert to his radical positions. But in retrospect it is obvious that the Stalinists and conservatives failed to grasp this. Chikin continued on his course, while *Pravda* editor Afanasiev launched the campaign against Shatrov. This failure by some senior media people to pay heed to signals from the top—their careers are made by and depend on precisely their capacity to comprehend the most subtle political signals—suggests deliberate defiance on their part, inspired by their confident perception that Gorbachev was on the verge of being engulfed by the rising Stalinist/conservative tide.

Gorbachev was soon to disprove this. Speaking at the Central Committee plenum on February 18, he emphasized the importance of *glasnost* and reaffirmed his commitment to socialist pluralism and democratization. He also hinted

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that those in leadership positions who objected to this were "unacceptable."

Soon after that, on February 29, *Pravda* published the strong defense of Shatrov by his colleagues. All this combined to convince the Stalinists and conservatives that Gorbachev, recovering from the setbacks of late 1987, was beginning to push hard toward the Nineteenth Party Conference in June, with radical changes in mind. This was upsetting to the conservatives, especially in the party, who feared and loathed the prospects of far-reaching political and ideological reform. They had to do something to stop Gorbachev from going too far. But since they did not constitute an organized opposition, they had to find a simple formula that would rally the widest possible support from the diverse ranks of the party bureaucracy and the general public. This was the reason, on March 13, for Chikin and Company to launch their Exocet missile, the "I Cannot Betray My Principles" letter. It was no coincidence that the schoolteacher's letter was published almost on the third anniversary of Gorbachev's coming to power, March 11, 1985. Some present.

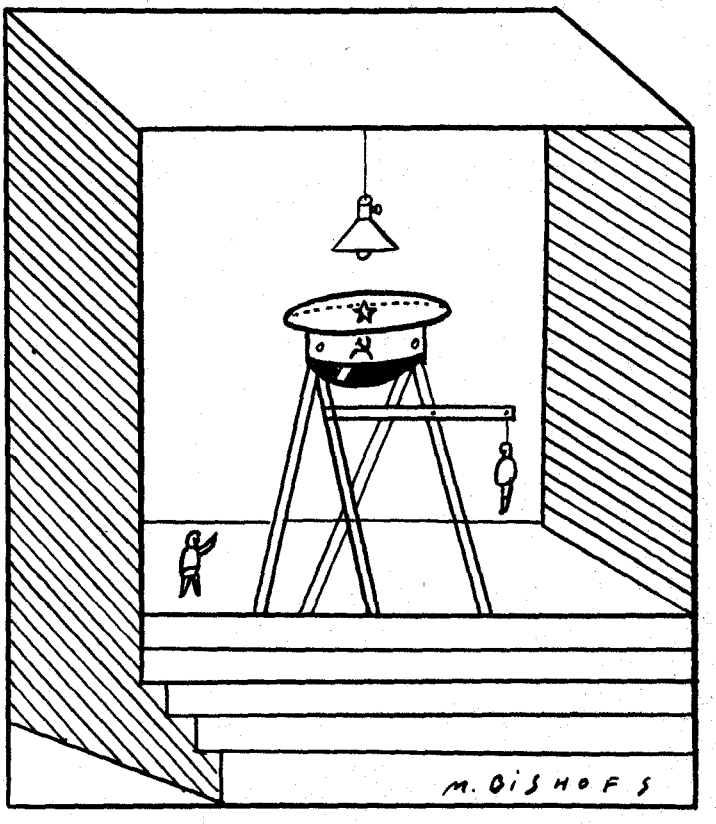
The letter itself has a complex history. No doubt *Sovetskaya Rossiya* did receive a minor pro-Stalin letter. All Soviet newspapers receive plenty of them, some of which are duly reflected in the correspondence columns and even debated. In this case, however, the letter became a handy weapon. Chikin, according to common knowledge in Moscow, showed it to his high-level political patron or patrons, who thought it useful ammunition against *perestroika*. The identity of this patron is not known, although some people mention Yegor Ligachev, the number-two man in the Politburo. This linkage should be treated with some caution because among the intelligentsia strong prejudice against Ligachev has taken root, and whenever a negative development takes place it is attributed to him. It is hard to believe that Ligachev, a highly intelligent conservative reformer, would be a party to such a crude maneuver, whatever his ideological reservations about Gorbachev's approach. At the same time, it is clear that Chikin would not have acted the way he did without support from somewhere above.

Indeed, the course Chikin chose was grossly provocative. Doing a Yeltsin in reverse, he decided to embellish and expand the Andreyeva missive into a manifesto. He did not do it single-handedly, of course. It was a collective effort by the opponents of Gorbachev, who were in a great hurry to undermine the General Secretary and the whole philosophy of *perestroika*. The publication of the letter evoked considerable comment. People began whispering that the conservatives were gaining ground again. But while everyone talked about the matter, nothing further appeared in the media for several weeks. In fact, many provincial and local papers were encouraged to reprint the *Sovetskaya Rossiya* letter on suggestions emanating from various quarters in Moscow. Others printed it on the instructions of local party bosses, who found it an answer to their prayers.

Opponents of *perestroika* in Eastern Europe were also alerted. Some of them delightedly seized upon the *Sovetskaya Rossiya* manifesto to show that conservative sentiments were gaining the upper hand in the Soviet capital. Not quite grasping the undercurrents in Moscow, the leading and conservative East German newspaper *Neues Deutschland* published the full text of "I Cannot Betray My Principles" in the weekend issue of April 2-3. Not surprisingly, the *Pravda* rebuttal on April 5 came as a thunderclap in East Berlin, and the East German paper had to atone for its misjudgment by reprinting that full text as well on April 9-10.

The *Sovetskaya Rossiya/Pravda* controversy immediately became a landmark in current political developments in the Soviet Union, revealing the breadth of the national divide. It refuted the view, too easily and readily assumed for nearly three years by many inside and outside the country, that everyone, except a small, insignificant minority, supports Gorbachev. It also illuminated another peculiar aspect of the struggle. Usually, nations wrestle with their present for the sake of the future. In the Soviet case, it is very evident that the struggle is between the past and the future, not between the present and the future. If the protagonists of *perestroika* lose, it will mean in many disturbingly significant ways a return to the past and forfeiture of the future.

But the Stalinists remained unabashed. In the ensuing public debate, many of them wrote to *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, *Pravda* and other newspapers, criticizing the position taken by *Pravda* and upholding the Andreyeva letter, bluntly and forcefully expressing their agreement with its basic ideas. As *Moscow News* of April 10 disclosed, anonymous typewritten tracts are being circulated by the Stalinists and conservatives to gain public support. One such missive, called "Information for Reflection," contends that *perestroika* will first lead to "economic disaster and social upheaval, and then to the country's enslavement by imperialist states." As an alternative it proposes "the establishment of a strong and effective



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state power" that will rally the public for a giant social program. However, expressions of dismay over such ideas are also widespread. On the evening of Sunday, April 17, an unscheduled forty-five-minute discussion of the *Sovetskaya Rossiya/Pravda* matter was shown on television at peak viewing hours. The positive development for Gorbachev is that the intelligentsia, sensing the danger in the situation, is rallying to his side. In the *Pravda* of April 18, the leaders of seven different creative unions denounced *Sovetskaya Rossiya*. The next day, in a letter to *Pravda*, thirty-eight of the top-ranking Soviet writers declared their passionate support for "revolutionary *perestroika*" and called for more *glasnost*, more democracy and more socialism.

The best clarification of the anti-Stalinist point of view was playwright Alexander Gelman's speech delivered on March 23 at a party meeting of the Bureau of the Soviet Filmmakers Union. It was subsequently published in *Sovetskaya Kultura*, on April 9. The speech stands as a significant indicator of the concern and fear the Andreyeva letter aroused, and how it has galvanized many people in influential circles. Gelman contended that although *perestroika* was still continuing after three years, it was not yet irreversible. The struggle to influence the outcome of the upcoming party conference, he argued, has become sharper because Gorbachev must use the event to make *perestroika* irreversible.

Gelman's view was that the publication of the Andreyeva letter just as the conference was being prepared had been deliberately designed to reinforce certain programmatic aspects of conservative forces within the party. The defense of Stalinism, he noted, serves only the intrinsic interests of the state and party bureaucracy, which uses it to keep politics and morality separate and to avoid being condemned for old sins in order to be free to commit new ones. Gelman argued that the more clever and farsighted adversaries of *perestroika* use quite another strategy: substituting liberalization for democratization. He drew an important distinction between these two concepts. While democratization means a redistribution of power, rights and liberties and the creation of a number of independent structures for governing and disseminating information, liberalization essentially means preservation of the administrative system in a softer variant. Thus liberalization is an "open fist" that can be easily closed again at any time.

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Gelman's analysis of the present political situation is notable because of his four-point program for the Nineteenth Party Conference. He argues that its proceedings should be open, and that all the speeches and debates should be published in full; that the conference should decide the proceedings of future Central Committee plenums, in effect the parliament of the party, should also be open; that the term for holding elective posts in the party organs should be limited to eight to ten years; and that complete information should be made available about the personal biographies and outlooks of the leaders, with their activities subject to public supervision. In addition, Gelman demanded more *glasnost* in the media and the establishment of a ministry or state committee to investigate the problems of various nationalities. He warned, too, that the danger to *perestroika* comes not only from its opponents but also from extremists among its supporters.

The most unusual aspect of Gelman's speech is that it was adopted, in its entirety, by the party bureau of the Filmmakers Union and forwarded to the Central Committee as a recommendation. That was an unprecedented action by a local party organization. It also suggests that demands are being made on Gorbachev not only by conservatives but also by progressives who are now pushing their agenda openly. There is no mistaking that this struggle on the eve of the conference is the single most decisive battle the Soviet leader has engaged in since coming to power. One indication of its seriousness is the way Gorbachev is now engaged in mobilizing support for his policies in the wake of the Stalinist maneuvers. For three days, on April 11, 14 and 18, he held consultations with groups of first secretaries of the republics, regions and districts, in preparation for the conference. They are the key people who will determine its outcome.

For the first time, supporters of the reforms are being called upon to unite on a partisan basis. The pretense that the nation is united behind *perestroika* has been discarded. This sense of danger to the future of *perestroika* was strongly conveyed by the influential economist Gavrill Popov in *Sovetskaya Kultura* on April 7. To release the brakes being applied by the ideological opponents requires, he wrote, "the unification of the maximum numbers of those who think alike, the *perestroika* supporters."

Clearly this was a summons to battle. On May 2, supporters of *perestroika* fired another salvo. That morning, *Pravda* published an extraordinary front-page critique of the way the Communist Party has ruled the Soviet Union since 1917. The attack, published in the form of a letter to the newspaper, called for reforms that are part of Gorbachev's platform for the party conference, including direct election to senior party posts by secret ballot, the introduction of genuine debate at party congresses and limited terms for high-level posts. As Gelman had warned, "The struggle is not finished; its most decisive and difficult stage is just beginning." More poignantly, posing the question of whether it will be the fault of opponents or supporters if *perestroika* fails, he stated: "My unequivocal answer is, its supporters would be guilty." □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

King Cohn

ROBERT SHERRILL

CITIZEN COHN. *By Nicholas von Hoffman. Doubleday. 483 pp. $19.95.*

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ROY COHN. *By Sidney Zion. Lyle Stuart. 284 pp. $18.95.*

Briefly, in the nastiest of times, Roy Cohn did certain things that made him worthy of a historical footnote. In the eighteen months he served as Senator Joseph McCarthy's chief counsel, he contributed in some degree to the establishment of what Nicholas von Hoffman calls our ongoing era of two dreadful isms: loyaltyism and securityism.

But, though Cohn was one of the brashest and most easily hated, he was only one of numerous creators of the isms, and his role has probably been greatly overrated simply because he was so adept at publicizing himself.

In any event, the importance of Roy Cohn's life after that "short, wild ride" in Washington thirty-five years ago was of no significance at all. Except as it illuminated, and still illuminates, the society that fawned over him and allowed him to flourish. In that respect, but only in that respect, it was of enormous significance.

Von Hoffman reminds us that Cohn "lived in a matrix of crime and unethical conduct," "derived a significant part of his income from illegal or unethical schemes and conspiracies," and thrived "cheek by jowl with so many men of sharp practice and dim luster in business and politics" that Cohn's pal Joey Adams, the comedian, would say of Cohn's dinner parties, "If you're indicted you're invited."

But important unindicted people were invited, too. And they went. Large slices of the upper crust of New York and Washington snuggled up to him, laughed and entertained one another with stories about his crimes as though they were choice insiders' jokes, and wrestled for the privilege of partying with Cohn and his crooked and perverse friends. Why choose his company? The sleaze of Roy Cohn was no secret. Why ignore it? Why excuse it? The only important questions forced on us by these books have nothing to do with Roy Cohn, but everything to do with judges and lawyers and publishers and writers and TV stars and politicians and developers—the wealthy and the powerful people who for many years ate Roy Cohn's shit with a grin.

An example. Cohn was attorney for Studio 54, which von Hoffman identifies as "perhaps *the* most glamorous, fashion-setting nightclub to popularize drug use among white-collar people." Cocaine was its mother's milk. "That the establishment was run on lines contravening half the laws in the statute book made it not one whit less popular." For special celebrities, the wildest parties were held in the basement, where, along with high society's homosexuals, transsexuals and transvestites, one could find many illustrious souls who were there for the kick of watching and smelling. It was in Studio 54's catacombs, writes von Hoffman, that Cohn held some of his biggest birthday bangs, attended on at least one occasion by "the important officials of the Democratic, Republican, and Conservative parties, most of the city's major elected officials, a number of congressmen, the Chief Judge of the United States District Court and Roy's usuals, comedian Joey Adams, columnist William Safire, Donald Trump, Si Newhouse, Sidney Zion, and doubtless many another that the excluded *Voice* reporters did not pick up on standing outside in the street."

Why were *those* people there, sucking up to Cohn?

And what were people like Geraldine Ferraro and Alan Dershowitz ("who was a somewhat well-disposed acquaintance of Roy's") doing at other Cohn parties and showing up as character witnesses when he was about to be disbarred?

And aren't liberals a bit troubled when they read that one of their old standard-bearers, Murray Kempton, had "a contemptuous affection for Roy"? What is contemptuous affection? Is that what liberals feel who are too gutless to hate?

Is it possible that the New York legal community is as riddled with corruption as even the surface evidence in these books indicates? To be sure, Cohn was ultimately disbarred—for lying, for stealing insurance money received after the burning of a yacht on which a crew member died (murder?), for trying to cheat a client out of $100,000, and for forging a signature—but the bar's blustery pretense of morality did not come until Cohn was so sick he could never have practiced law again anyhow. Where were the pious attorneys when he was riding high? It wasn't that they were ignorant of his shenanigans. Von Hoffman says that "some of the most important and influential practitioners of law in the United States had an idea of what kind of lawyer Roy was years before he was expelled from his profession"; indeed, more than an "idea." Cohn was famous among lawyers for winning cases by "delays, evasions, lies, and fixes," and by some he was "considered the brains behind whole networks of thieving public officials."

It's because they provoke, endlessly, questions about supposedly decent people—not because they give an elaborate résumé of Cohn—that these two books are important social documents.

And always there are troubling questions about the press. Why was it—if von Hoffman knows what he's talking about—that, at the very height of Cohn's criminal career, only one newspaper of general circulation, the New York *Daily News*, communicated to the subway straphangers that "the glamor lawyer was a crook"? Besides the *News*, only *The Village Voice* and *The American Lawyer* told the truth about Cohn. At the same time, "the New York *Times*, the most prestigious of the print media, continued to put Roy in its news columns in a most favorable light, while CBS News, then the most prestigious of the broadcasting media, did a laudatory '60 Minutes' piece." Sometimes lawyers settled cases with Cohn not because they couldn't whip him in court but because they feared that Cohn would smear them and their clients through easy manipulation of the press. As one lawyer told Steven Brill, publisher of *The American Lawyer*,

> We weren't buying off the lawsuit. We were buying off Roy Cohn. It's Cohn we were interested in, and what he said he could do to us in the press. . . . He can get a headline in *The Wall Street Journal* or the New York *Times*

Robert Sherrill is co-author of Why They Call It Politics: A Guide to America's Government *(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich).*

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by picking up a phone. . . . These papers printed uncritical, big headline accounts of Cohn's charges.

Someday William Safire, a very old and very close friend of Roy Cohn, may be so kind as to entertain us in his *New York Times Magazine* column, "On Language," with a discussion of "press ethics," complete with illustrations of its oxymoronic qualities drawn from the press's relations with Cohn. He might even want to tell us, for example, what he thinks "sellout" means, in reference to the work of gossip columnists and political columnists.

When these columnists—people like Liz Smith and Safire himself—become conduits for the self-serving dirt supplied by a fellow like Cohn, and then give him the kind of publicity that he can change into power and money, is that selling out? Is it the same as giving and accepting a bribe?

Is Sidney Zion's book on Cohn the ultimate sellout? Zion, a former *New York Times* reporter, admits that Cohn did many favors for him, including helping him expedite a liquor license for a saloon Zion was buying, and he admits that Cohn was "the best source I had" for news tips. In return, says Zion, he gave Cohn "advice" on how to handle the people at *The Times*. As for other things Zion did for Cohn, he says vaguely, "He never asked me to do anything I wouldn't have done for him anyway." Which, given the fact that Zion refers to Cohn as "old buddy," is not very reassuring. For me, the whole Cohn-Zion relationship seems such a cozy swap-off that I would feel foolish indeed to bet on the accuracy of anything in Zion's book—either the so-called autobiographical part, which allegedly was dictated by Cohn in the closing period of his life when his mind was beginning to wander, or the defensive commentary of Zion. There are times when I suspect that Zion is using Cohn's "autobiography" to take care of some of his own vendettas. In any event, one should be very slow to trust anyone who—after conceding that Cohn had trashed the Bill of Rights, was a "rogue," a "legal executioner" and a "notorious bastard"—excuses his close friendship with Cohn by quoting that excruciating cliché of H. L. Mencken's: "What a dull world it would be for us honest men if it weren't for its sinners."

Let us look more closely at this cuddly fellow.

The biggest problem in Roy Cohn's life was being a Jew. He wanted to be a Jew, but at the same time he was ashamed of being a Jew.

Typically for Cohn, the pleasure of being a Jew was that it opened many avenues to be exploited and manipulated. (His father, Al, a respected judge—apparently no small accomplishment in New York—and political crew boss, first opened many of these avenues for him.) Cohn was skilled at tapping the fatherly instincts of older Jews. Hey, what a smart boy! And how mannerly! As a sapling attorney he courted fellows like Judge Jerome Frank, who came to despise Cohn, and Judge Irving Kaufman (more on him later). All his life, Cohn particularly sucked up to Jewish journalists, because he practiced law through headlines. He became a tout and gossip procurer for Walter Winchell, who returned the favor by giving Cohn his first national notoriety, and he was very close to the once-powerful columnist George Sokolsky, in whom Cohn saw a second father, and Richard Berlin, head of the Hearst newspaper conglomerate. Cohn was virtually a member of the newspapering Newhouse family; throughout his adult life he was in daily contact with Si Newhouse, and on one occasion old Samuel Newhouse gave Cohn a half-million bucks, free and clear, to get him out of a jam. And, as already mentioned, *The Times* in the Abe Rosenthal era was an entirely friendly dumping ground for Cohn's politically murderous gossip (such as the unproven rumor that Hamilton Jordan had partaken of cocaine at Studio 54).

On the other hand, Roy Cohn seems never to have come to terms with being a Jew. "Roy never tried to deny his Jewish heritage," writes von Hoffman, "yet at the same time it seemed as though he sometimes sought out people who thought less of him for having it." Many of his closest allies, people with whom he went far out of his way to collude in wickedness—J. Edgar Hoover, numerous congressmen and senators—did not like Jews. Cohn's parties frequently were heavy with people who didn't like Jews. Cohn gave some of von Hoffman's interviewees the feeling that he enjoyed being called a kike, and he frequently used the term himself. A *New York Post* gossip columnist recalls that "he could be like many Jews that I've known. He could be terribly anti-Semitic. . . . Roy was always calling people kikes—you know, terrible Jewish epithets . . . 'Typical kike

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remark,' he'd say; 'kike' this or that about money, a favorite word of his." Cohn had no closer friend or more loyal supporter than Si Newhouse, but it is said that Cohn, behind his back, called him "Jewhouse."

One might fairly assume that Cohn hated himself for being a Jew and spent a great deal of his life tormenting Jews to show that, down deep, he could be just as anti-Semitic as the most bigoted WASP. One must bear in mind that it took some doing in Cohn's early adulthood to achieve that equality, for it was an era when few respectable clubs accepted Jewish members and when most respectable private universities had Jewish quotas. What's more, there was, at least when Cohn was very young, still a sharp social distinction between German Jews and Russian Jews, the former considered much spiffier, the latter being Cohn's lineage (though Roy's mother pretended otherwise). This Jewish schism was no laughing matter. Indeed, the German Jewish banking establishment (the Loebs, the Kuhns, the Lehmans), von Hoffman tells us, teamed up with the Anglo-Saxon-controlled New York Clearing House to destroy Roy's much-beloved uncle Bernie, once a powerful banker who spent two years in Sing Sing. Roy Cohn never forgot the people who caused this family tragedy, and he never forgave. But he also learned from it what he considered a vital lesson: that it wasn't smart to be too different, too Jewish. While he made a career of insulting and ridiculing the WASP-defined ruling class, he worked ceaselessly to become a part of it, accepted by it, admired by it. He wanted nothing to do with losers, particularly Jewish losers, which may account for his having never been known to mention the Holocaust.

These were not rare sentiments. Many Jews felt just as he did, totally willing to exploit their Jewishness and at the same time ashamed of it, angry because they were prisoners of it.

In Cohn's life, this resulted in grotesque ironies. Toward the end of his brief fling as Senator Joseph McCarthy's high executioner, when other senators were pressing McCarthy to fire him, McCarthy warned them—on orders from Cohn, who many believe controlled McCarthy far more than McCarthy controlled him—that if he were forced to fire Cohn it would be an obvious act of anti-Semitism "and Winchell and Sokolsky would have plenty to say about that."

Cohn's using the "anti-Semitic" threat took balls indeed, seeing as how he had been for several years the foremost example in America of what he called the great anti-Semitic tradition of putting "a Jew . . . to catch a Jew." Cohn helped "catch" many Jews, politically and socially. And on at least one occasion he not only helped catch Jews but kill them as well.

This, of course, was in the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg espionage trial. On the record, Cohn, as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, was what a later American Bar Association report called "the third-ranking member of the prosecution staff." In fact, as von Hoffman correctly insists and as the "Cohn" of Sidney Zion's book boasts, he helped persuade presiding Judge Irving Kaufman (in illegal ex parte discussions) that the death penalty was the right penalty. Von Hoffman points out that the bar association subcommittee (whose most important member was Simon Rifkind, a chap "quite close to Roy") later exonerated both men of carrying on in such an unfair fashion. But Zion quotes Cohn as saying that while he had no influence on Kaufman's sentencing Julius to the chair—after all, quoth Zion's Cohn, "Kaufman told me *before* the trial started that he was going to sentence Julius Rosenberg to death"—he did perhaps persuade Kaufman to fry Ethel.

Kaufman, says Zion's Cohn, "was concerned about a possible public opinion backlash if he sentenced a woman to the electric chair, particularly a mother with two young children." Cohn continues:

> Irving Kaufman has said that he sought divine guidance in his synagogue before deciding upon the sentences. I can't confirm or deny this. So far as I know, the closest he got to prayer was the phone booth next to the Park Avenue Synagogue. He called from that booth to a phone I used, behind the bench in the courtroom, to ask my advice on whether he ought to give the death penalty to Ethel Rosenberg. We often communicated during the Rosenberg case in this manner.

Cohn advised him to shoot the juice to her because "she's worse than Julius. . . . she was the mastermind of this conspiracy."

Having helped dispose of the Rosenbergs, Cohn responded to his destiny by moving temporarily to what he called the "capital of cutthroats," Washington, where he got the job with McCarthy's committee that Bobby Kennedy

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had sorely wanted and that he hated Cohn for beating him out of. (And, being the true son of his father, Bobby probably hated Cohn for being a Jew.) Cohn's vigorous and sometimes crazed part in the Communist witchhunts of the era had nothing to do with patriotism. As a patriot, he can be measured by the fact that he "slither[ed] out of the armed service," to use von Hoffman's phrase, in both World War II and the Korean War in a very crafty way. A congressman was pressured into appointing him to West Point—not once, but three times; each time Cohn failed the West Point exam, but he could not be drafted as long as he was trying to get in, so he managed to delay long enough to see the end of World War II from the safe perch of Columbia Law School. And when the draft was revived in the Korean War, Cohn again successfully avoided service by joining the National Guard.

If patriotism did not drive him to Washington, what did? He says he went to "cure my inferiority complex." Since he had never as a lawyer shown the feeling, he must have meant something stemming from his Jewishness. He was ashamed that Jews were getting something of a reputation as far-lefters. "Not all Jews are Communists," he said in the McCarthy days, "but most Communists are Jews." Like his mentor columnist Sokolsky, whose sympathy for Jews was so limited that he had what von Hoffman calls an "apparent willingness to accommodate himself to European fascism," Cohn was very worried "lest the non-Jewish public get the idea that Jews loved Moscow more than America." The McCarthy committee's shoveling into the affairs of the Army at Fort Monmouth was particularly fruitful in this regard, so much so that Jewish groups complained that "most of the witnesses at the hearings were Jewish" and "most of the scientists suspended at Fort Monmouth were also."

Significantly, the most important actions taken by Cohn in Washington were self-destructive. He destroyed forever all chances for real acceptance by either the Jewish or WASP upper class. And he destroyed his alter ego, McCarthy.

He did the first by forcing two favorites of the WASPish old-school-tie Foreign Service to resign. He ruined one career by threatening—plenty ironic, considering Cohn's later recreational preferences—to expose an old homosexual affair, and he ruined the other career by threatening to expose an old secret marriage. He did this to avenge the way the Foreign Service had made him and his colleague G. David Schine look so ridiculous in their book-burning tour of Europe—a tour which Cohn would years later admit was "a colossal mistake." Adds von Hoffman, "how big a colossal mistake he probably never understood." He

> had gone out in the world and done things to men, non-Communist, non-criminal men, which would never be forgiven. The trip had changed the course of his life; this was not a question of a Democratic boy going to work for a Republican senator; this was welding himself to a political faction that people from his background despised. Publicly, there was no way back for Roy.

To the establishment, Cohn "had stamped himself a varlet. Roy *had* to sneer at Harvard, Yale, and the Union League Club; that world was [now] closed to him forever."

As for McCarthy, drunken and malleable and dumb, Cohn destroyed him by forcing him to hound and hound the Army to give Schine favored treatment in boot camp, a pursuit that was tactically insane and ultimately led to the hearings that ruined McCarthy and of course ended Cohn's Washington career. The anti-Army crusade was so bizarre as to make one almost believe Cohn willed his own defeat.

Cohn returned to New York City and went into the practice of law at a level where most payments were under the table. Here again, Cohn was turning inside out the Jewishness of his early training and environment. Thanks to a judge who was a friend of Cohn's father, he was taken into a solid and reputable law firm (Saxe, Bacon & O'Shea, later Saxe, Bacon & Bolan) in 1957, and he managed within a dozen years to destroy its reputation by both sloppy lawyering and shady lawyering. It became known as the law firm that bought off judges, suborned witnesses and won cases through trickery and political pressure. "The acts Roy was committing," writes von Hoffman, "were the antithesis of what he had learned from men like Jerome Frank; they were an affront to the rock-sure morality of the conscientious Jewish professional and business men of his growing up."

"By early 1963," von Hoffman goes

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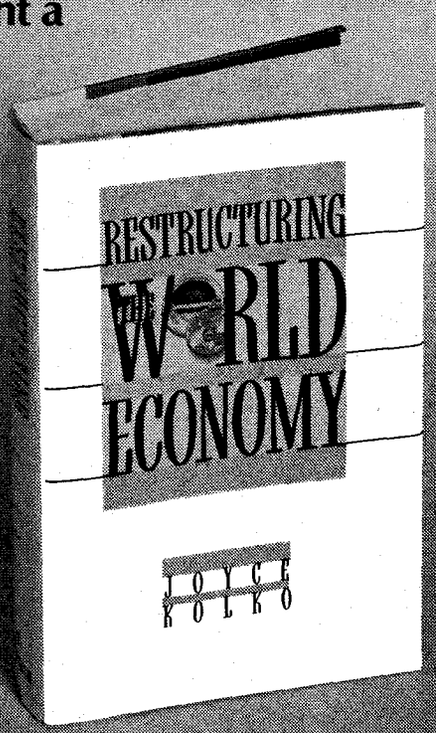

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on, "Roy had won himself a reputation, among reporters and editors willing to believe the worst if given a little evidence to hang it on, as a sleazy man of affairs." This is one of the several times that von Hoffman shows a strange contempt for Cohn's critics. What's with him? What does he mean by "a little evidence"? Von Hoffman lists mountains of evidence: looting enterprises by collecting excessive fees; asking other lawyers around his firm to sign false affidavits (and telling one who wouldn't, "I can't afford your Harvard ethics"); asking clients for money to bribe the judge and then pocketing the bribe money; or *not* telling clients he was going to bribe judges, and doing it. His money was spread widely. "If fixing the clerks wouldn't accomplish his goals," says von Hoffman, "Roy would tamper with witnesses." There were strong suspicions that he sometimes defrauded his own law partners. On at least one occasion he allowed top Mafia bosses to hold their meeting in his office so that, if wiretapped, what they said could not be used against them in court because of the lawyer-client relationship—a relationship with the Mafia, it should be added, that was much too extensive and friendly and covered too many years to be in any way innocent. (Indeed, if Zion's Cohn is to be believed—always a big if—he got Irving Saypol, the prosecutor in the Rosenberg case, appointed U.S. Attorney through the good offices of Frank Costello, it being the case, says Cohn, that "the mob had for years . . . decided the appointment of the U.S. attorney."

Cohn's most despicable crime as a lawyer, the professional crime for which there is no forgiveness, was defrauding his clients. He did it in myriad ways. Sometimes he would take their money, promise his personal help and turn the case over to the most unpracticed members of the firm, young men who had never even been in court; occasionally he dumped cases on law students who were just hanging around. Sometimes Cohn would take a client's money and turn up in court so poorly prepared that it was inevitable the client would go to jail. Indeed, he seldom made formal preparations for a trial but instead relied on what one close associate called his talents as an "intimidator and bluffer and bullshit artist." Sometimes he would take a client's money and give no representation at all, none: pure swindle.

There was, in fact, nothing so unprofessional, so unethical, that he would not do it to a client. Perhaps his most memorable trick was to turn rat, stool pigeon, on one client in an effort to save another. Von Hoffman writes,

> One disco owner, a client of Roy's who had been paying Roy to bribe New York City officials to get a zoning variance, had confidential lawyer-client tax information turned over to the government to rescue the owners of Studio 54 from impending incarceration. It didn't work, but the man, who went to the penitentiary himself, might have taken Roy with him had he learned of his attorney's treason soon enough.

And of course Cohn constantly—constantly—leaked stuff to the press about his clients to get publicity for himself. It was this total disloyalty that made some observers wonder what Safire and Zion and others in Cohn's retinue were talking about when they spoke of his loyalty. Steven Brill, of *The American Lawyer*, told von Hoffman, "He was the most disloyal person to clients imaginable. . . . I really want to know why Bill Safire likes him so much. Loyalty? Dogs have loyalty. He was never loyal to clients."

Cohn was notorious as a deadbeat. Except for what he owed homosexual prostitutes, he never paid his bills. Creditors could always sue him, of course, but "suing Roy could be a costly waste of time. The lawyers' fees might soon equal the size of the debt and the case would not go to trial, particularly in New York City where Roy had one or perhaps two judges, who must have been on his pad, because they would grant any postponement, any preliminary motion he asked for." Occasionally a creditor would win a suit, but they virtually never collected because he had nothing they could attach (as the I.R.S. discovered; he went to his grave owing it $7 million). He rented or leased everything. He had no bank account. He wasn't paid for his legal work but got phony "loans" or lived on a kind of millionaire's barter system. Very often he paid his own staff with bad checks. Indeed, Cohn could have been prosecuted for fraud because of the pattern of his nonpayments.

His life was spent in a cocoon of filth and disrepair. "The expression used to describe Roy's abodes time and time again was 'shit house,'" writes von Hoffman. His bedroom was decorated

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with frogs: frog drawings, frog paintings, frog decals, frog patterns on sheets, on nightshirts, on wallpaper, froggies everywhere; it was a room "bulging with stuffed animals, in this enormous turn-of-the-century townhouse, the plaster cracking, the paint all but gone from the walls, leaks squirting, and drafts finding their way through the ill-attended cracks."

His table manners were notoriously foul. He would eat from other people's plates, using his fingers, dipping his fingers into their gravy. He craved sweets but feared getting fat, so, as one boyfriend recalled, "in these fancy restaurants he'd order the yummy desserts, eat them and then spit them out into a napkin."

Was this the dapper lawyer whose name endlessly splotched the gossip columns of New York, the celebrated man-about-town fixer who threw parties at Studio 54 that mayors and congressmen and Harvard lawyers fought to be invited to? The same. If you see a split, splintered, shattered personality here, you're right. There was a deep streak of madness in Cohn, perhaps inherited from his mother's side. His maternal grandmother was deranged. One of his mother's brothers was "either mentally retarded or brain-damaged." Some members of the Cohn family thought Roy's mother should have been institutionalized. Everyone agreed she was extremely neurotic at the very least.

But the madness, I think, was also generated by self-hatred. (As a reward for wading through these two biographical bogs, I am surely entitled to indulge in a bit of amateur psychoanalysis.)

How could he avoid self-hatred? He betrayed his moralistic Jewish inheritance, betrayed his political party (he never quit claiming to be a Democrat), tricked his friends, defrauded his law partners, cheated his clients, treated his profession like a whorehouse. It was only natural, and doubtless subconsciously to him seemed absolutely just, that as punishment he destroy his own reputation and his body.

As everyone knows, Cohn, "the best-known non-show-business homosexual in the country," died of AIDS.

When he was young, he dated girls. He claimed to have been engaged to Barbara Walters at one time. They were friends for many years, but he had few other women friends. Some who knew him well say he hated women.

Just how long he was a homosexual is not clear. Zion says a doctor told him that Cohn had been having sex with men since he was 15. Von Hoffman cites a reporter who remembers seeing Cohn in the homosexual bars around Washington when Cohn was in his mid-20s. But others say they knew—because they shared hotel rooms with him—that Cohn engaged in straight sex as a young man. Always with prostitutes. Not nice girls. And even with the prostitutes, one of his old pals says, "he seemed to be one of those people who was just weird about sex the way he was weird about everything else."

Von Hoffman indicates that Cohn really came out of the closet when his mother died. Others have said the same. It isn't surprising that they link the twists and turns of his sex life to his mother, an extremely dominating woman. She and Roy were so close it was rumored he used to date her. In any event, by the 1970s Cohn found his relaxation in places that were, as a lover reported, "wall-to-wall anywhere from sixteen-year-olds to thirty-year-old body builders who'd be wearing dungarees with a surface tension of sixty pounds per square inch. We're talking about guys with huge musculature packed into T-shirts with stuffed crotches [*sic*], bikini briefs stuffed with Kleenex—a 'big box' is what it's called."

Cohn was a particularly nasty homosexual. He was often a favored guest at the ranch of multimillionaire Shearn Moody, who readily provided, we learn, "many little boys of the night" to guests who desired them. The story is that one night Cohn desired a boy who turned out to have warts on his penis, but Cohn said, "Oh well, I don't care." And the first thing you know, Cohn had "venereal warts on his anus."

Cohn's appetite for sex was hearty, to say the least. One of his longtime lovers told von Hoffman, "The joke was five a night at a hundred a pop. Roy was incredibly promiscuous." Another said, "Roy had to have sex every night, and no matter what the cost . . . he would have someone there. If it wasn't me, it was Peter, Dirk, a guy named Bill who did porno movies. . . . no matter what, he had to have it every night. And then he would beat off afterward to pornography. . . . I think for all the times he liked to be on the top so much, he loved being on the bottom."

Cohn was rumored to have humped, or been humped by, Schine, his colleague of the McCarthy days, but von Hoffman says there is no evidence of such a relationship. Ditto the rumors that he humped, or was humped by, his dirt-supplying pal J. Edgar Hoover. Ditto the rumors that he humped, or was humped by, Cardinal Spellman (who reputedly was hot for choirboys)—all very, very close friends of Cohn, to be sure, but by von Hoffman's reckoning they serviced one another only in political ways.

What of Cohn's rumored relationship with homosexuals around Reagan?

> When Roy's name comes up among straight people with an inside knowledge of Washington politics, particularly Democrats, there is speculating about him and the "lavender Mafia," which is the group of closet homosexuals in important positions in the Reagan administration. Whether a "ring" of such men, bound together by power, politics, and sexual preference, exists depends as much on semantics as observed behavior. However the ring question is resolved, one of Roy's paths of access to the Reagan administration, but only one of several, was his connection with certain homosexual men near the White House.

This seems to be a line of investigation that von Hoffman was too lazy to pursue. Roughly how many men does he mean? How close to the White House do these rumors take us? How high do they go? (He does mention one "important operative in the Reagan camp," whatever that means.) Von Hoffman leaves these questions alone.

Typically disloyal, Cohn gave no support to homosexuals who were trying to win public acceptance. He called them

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"fags," did all he could to make their lives miserable, lectured against them, berated politicians for any display of tolerance toward homosexuals and urged laws to restrict their freedom. To his death he denied that he was homosexual, but the Dorian Gray scene of his dying of AIDS said it all: "Roy . . . lay in bed, unheeding, his flesh cracking open, sores on his body, his faculties waning" and with a one-inch "slit-like wound above [his] anus."

It's said that the one true love in Roy Cohn's life was his spaniel, Charlie Brown. □

Changer la Vie

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

IS SOCIALISM DOOMED?: The Meaning of Mitterrand. *By Daniel Singer. Oxford University Press. 288 pp. $24.95.*

The defeat of the French Socialist experiment between 1981 and 1983 was a shattering event for democratic socialism. Here was a movement that, at the moment of its triumph, promised to fulfill both the dreams of May '68 and of traditional social democracy, to unite the rose with the fist. In addition to challenging the quantitative injustices of capitalism, it was determined to *changer la vie* by creating a new mode of life, one which was also more decentralized and communitarian. Yet only one year after winning the presidency with an absolute parliamentary majority, the French Socialists were in retreat; within two years they were, at least as far as their project was concerned, routed.

Did this defeat mark the downfall of socialism? In his important new book, *Is Socialism Doomed?: The Meaning of Mitterrand*, Daniel Singer answers, Not necessarily, unless, that is, one takes capitalism to be the end of history. But Singer does not simply affirm a faith in socialism; he also tries to understand what went wrong in France in the early 1980s, the better to prepare for the future. And his judgment is harsh: François Mitterrand and his comrades, "whatever their ambitions and claims, have at best slowed down, not shaped, the course of events, the groping search for a socialist future."

Well, yes and no. My disagreement, I should make clear, has to do with nuance, not with substance. For this book is clearly must reading for anyone who wants to understand not simply what happened in France but the future of socialism itself. I differ only with regard to the stress that Singer puts on will as against circumstance. And even then, the book fully recognizes the factors I find crucial. It just evaluates their relative importance in a slightly different way from my own analysis.

The Socialists, Singer documents in an excellent introductory chapter, came to power after an extraordinary period in which French—and Western European—society had gone through a sea change. A modernized Taylorism, an interventionist state and the opening of frontiers did indeed *changer la vie.* The peasant proportion of the population was radically reduced as labor power shifted from the fields to the service sector, while industrial employment remained steady. Women and immigrants flooded into the work force, and the power of the traditional blue-collar unions declined. All this happened during the economically Jacobin regime of Charles de Gaulle, creating the conditions for 1968.

In the 1970s, Giscard d'Estaing acknowledged that he, too, was a social democrat (he even invited some immigrants to the Elysée for breakfast). But time was running out on the Keynesian miracle, and Giscard presided over a striking loss of industrial vitality, and deindustrialization. The Socialists formulated their program without noticing that history had turned a corner. They therefore proposed a "rupture" with capitalism on the basis of a consistent, left-Keynesian program based on poor and working-class consumption and looking toward new forms of social life—at the precise moment when that option had become impossible.

"The French Left," Singer rightly comments, "climbed into office without any public discussion of the new economic predicament." And this is indeed where the emphasis on specifically Socialist failure and responsibility should be placed. I should only add that I disagree with the evaluation of Michel Rocard and his tendency within the Socialist movement. It was not simply social democratic; it was also the only source that questioned the euphoric assumptions of the majority (and one should not forget that the entire international New Left was in the grip of the same illusions about the imminent Keynesian abolition of scarcity).

So far, so good. But once the bad news became apparent—that the economic stimulus of 1981 was creating more work in West Germany and Japan than in France, that the government had nationalized some lemons with 100 percent compensation, that the international banks would not tolerate the trade and government deficits for long—what were the alternatives? Daniel Singer believes that the Socialists could have mobilized the populace to overcome these constraints. I disagree.

As Singer recognizes, France had moved intellectually to the right at the very moment that it elected a government of the left. Mitterrand was in office and Reaganism and Solzhenitsyn were both in vogue. Even more to the point, could a middling economic power like France have challenged the international division of labor as Singer (and the left wing of French Socialism) proposed? I don't think so. I see Mitterrand and company as crushed by circumstances beyond their control—although they should be severely faulted for their naïveté about the system they inherited. I do believe that if, the day after his election, Mitterrand had devalued the franc, appealed for a thirty-five-hour work week for thirty-five hours' pay and proposed sacrifice in the name of social justice, it would have made a difference. But I am not sure how long even the benefits of that decision would have lasted.

The personality of François Mitterrand, surely one of the most fascinating of contemporary political figures, is threaded through the plot of this book, and it is typical of Singer's intellectual depth that he does not demonize the French leader. "The discourse developed by Mitterrand over ten years . . . was not just make-believe. The logic of opposition, the influence of more radical companions, the general mood after 1968, and the fate of Salvador Allende drove this middle-class reformer to perceive himself as the leader who would somehow defy 'the powers of money.' . . . All this gradually, peacefully, within existing institutions."

That last comment is the essential one

Michael Harrington's autobiography, The Long-Distance Runner, *will be published in July by Henry Holt & Co.*

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and the central point of a very fine book. However we differ on the details of allocating the responsibility for the French past, Singer and I agree. There is no painless way to *changer la vie*. Radical transformation should have been on the agenda in 1981 and, more to the point, it will be in the future. ☐

THEATER.

THOMAS M. DISCH

Chess
Domino
The Birthday Party
Romance Romance

Robin Wagner's *Chess*, at the Imperial Theater in New York City, is your basic boy-meets-girl, boy-loses-girl musical romance. The boy, Anatoly, is a Russian chess champion; the girl, Florence, is the orphaned daughter of a Hungarian freedom fighter, now a naturalized American and acting as the second (sparring partner, coach) of Freddie, the Russian's bratty U.S. rival. Florence leaves Freddie for Anatoly after the young lovers have sung a duet in a Bangkok restaurant ("Terrace Duet" is the generic title in the program), and then Anatoly, victor in the match, defects. In the second act there is a rematch in Budapest, where the K.G.B. arranges for Anatoly to confront his abandoned wife, Svetlana, and for Florence to meet a crippled prisoner who may be her father, Gregor. Florence and Anatoly reprise, with anguish, their love duet "You and I," and then Florence, tragically alone, belts out "Anthem," with which Anatoly had brought down the curtain for Act I.

The machinery is all in place and functions smoothly. The three principals—Judy Kuhn, David Carroll and Philip Casnoff—do all that they can, vocally and theatrically, to keep us tuned to their channel; although I never did feel tempted to bolt my seat (as I had done, two weeks earlier, to escape the achingly misbegotten *Mail*), neither did I ever get swept away. My toe never even started to tap. Nor, though I'm an easy cry and everyone was working hard to induce lachrymal secretions, did *Chess* jerk any tears from me. The reason for this lack of affect is not far to seek. A wise consumer who reads labels will notice that *Chess* is "based on an idea" by its lyricist, Tim Rice, while credit for the book goes to Richard Nelson, a professional play-cobbler responsible for new adaptations and translations of plays by Chekhov, Beaumarchais and Molière, and plays of his own about Rip Van Winkle and Pinocchio. Nelson has manufactured a play from Rice's idea that has many of the qualities of life: complexity, animation, bilateral symmetry of plot. But if you prick it, it doesn't bleed. If the play could be disencumbered of Rice's greeting-card lyrics, and if the unmemorable score (by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus, components of the Swedish rock group ABBA) was redeployed as background music, the result might more nearly approach the condition of drama—or, more likely, its cogs and gears might be even more obtrusively noticeable.

To carp about the mechanical nature of *Chess*'s dramaturgy, however, is to miss its central excellence, which is the mechanical ingenuity of the physical staging. In a show so bereft of human dancing that one marvels that credit is given for "dance staging," all the kinetic energy is generated by the continual gyrations of the components of the set, for whose design Robin Wagner is credited. The whirligigging of the set's multiple monolithic towers—a kaleidoscopic Stonehenge—is of a speed and intricacy that would lead one to suppose only a computer could have coordinated its constant transformations. In fact, I am told that the computer system developed for this purpose couldn't cope, and all the magic was the work of stagehands, whose captain, stage manager Alan Hall, ought rightfully to share over-the-title billing with Wagner.

Chess is by no means the first musical to star its set; *Starlight Express* and *Phantom of the Opera* were similarly dehumanized; but the *Chess* set's pieces are waltzed about with a choreographic freedom that leads me to hope that Trevor Nunn and Robin Wagner's next musical collaboration may dispense with any vestigial human presence and simply present a history of the evolution of clocks and watches, set to music by Philip Glass.

One of the pleasures of morphology is to discover an underlying resemblance between seemingly disparate entities, such as potatoes, tobacco, belladonna and the other members of the wide and deadly nightshade family. A similar structural identity links Broadway's gargantuan and costly *Chess* with an Off

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Broadway melodrama produced by the New York Theatre Workshop, Robert Litz's *Domino*. *Domino* concerns the changing of the guard in a nameless Central American country from a corrupt right-wing dictatorship to a corrupt left-wing dictatorship, a transition being stage-managed by the Central Intelligence Agency. The story is schematically told on a bare set with seven actors, two of them in the multiple roles of (Hispanic) Man and (Hispanic) Woman, both of whom are constantly outsmarting the gringos in B'rer Rabbit style: kidnapping an obnoxious, golf-obsessed banker and holding him ransom (some light comedy in the interrogation and torture scene), blowing up an airplane and wreaking other revenges it would be unfair to reveal. Scene by scene, *Domino* holds the attention. The dialogue is snappy, and Dan Butler, in the role of the C.I.A. station chief, is an epitome of button-down-collar villainy. Short, smug and sinister, Butler has the makings of an American von Stroheim: a face you love to hate.

Butler's wonderful awfulness isn't enough, however, to make *Domino* work. It's not a matter of whether one agrees with its political premises. In many respects, I do. But its dramatic premises are flawed—and in exactly the way that the plot of *Chess* is flawed. Both posit a world in which the secret services, the C.I.A. and K.G.B., are the puppet masters of all events, against whose manipulations all other mortals—chess champions, generals, revolutionaries—are mere pawns, whose actions are destined to serve the ends of their secret masters. This is not only a doubtful proposition with regard to the real world, where the C.I.A. and K.G.B., though certainly unprincipled, are often demonstrably as stupid as our visible leaders; it is also a poor basis for storytelling, since it requires the good guys to be wimps, dupes and helpless victims. The politically inert may derive some comfort from supposing that City Hall can't be fought, especially when Iago is the Chief of Police, but there's precious little drama to be had from such supposings.

Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party* is appearing through May 22 at the C.S.C. Theatre on East Thirteenth Street. I regret being so tardy in my recommendation, for Carey Perloff's production is vivid and well marshaled. More than most plays, *The Birthday Party* depends on a director who can mold clear dramatic action from a text that is a puzzle-box of ambiguities. It was Pinter's specific inspiration to create a plot that is all event and atmosphere, where the warring tonalities of hard-boiled thriller and Beckettesque farce alternate and finally fuse. Any effort to account for the action on the basis of the characters' histories and motivations is wasted effort, nor is there any simple one-to-one symbolic schema by which the action can be interpreted. But that's not to say Pinter has evaded writing *about* anything. *The Birthday Party* is very cogently and accessibly about the ways in which people tease and terrorize each other, about the kinds of intelligence specific to prey and predator, and much else that, rendered as a maxim of psychology, might seem dull or doubtful but that *plays* very well. By unmooring his story from a basis in strict narrative logic, Pinter gives his audience the distanced perspective of an alienist who listens for the meaning of what a patient says in the inflections and cadences of his speech. All good dramatists rediscover the primacy of body English, gesture and phatic utterance, each in his own way. In this, his first full-length play, Pinter made the discovery with unusually clarifying effect, an effect that is still invigorating thirty years later.

Georgine Hall and Robert Gerringer as Meg and Petey are the incarnate spirit of English *lumpen* gentility. David Strathairn as Stanley, the cookie that all the play's machineries have been designed to crumble, is just smarmy enough that it is very hard not to identify with his gleeful tormenters, Goldberg and McCann, when they mysteriously appear and set to work on Stanley's nerves and sanity. In the latter roles, Peter Riegert and Richard Riehle steal the show, as is intended.

The only exception I take to the production is Loy Arcenas's set. More than most plays, *The Birthday Party* requires one invisible wall, not three. When the action hinges on Stanley being repeatedly prevented from exiting through an invisible door in an invisible wall, the suspense is theoretical at best.

Romance Romance was the last musical of the year to arrive on Broadway in time for Tony consideration, and while it may be too modest in scale to compete against such Godzillas as *Phantom* and *Chess*, its stars, Scott Bakula and Alison Fraser, are definite Tony contenders. Bakula has the leading-

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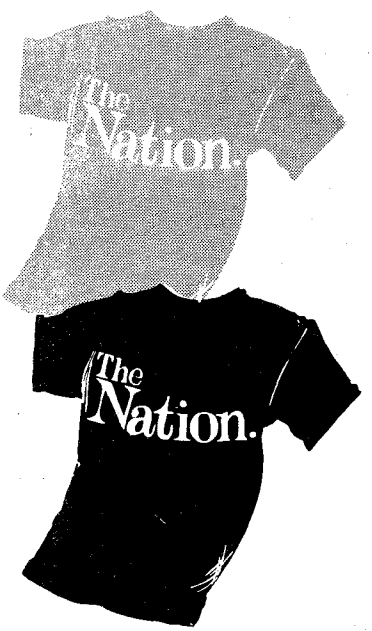

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man qualities of Cary Grant or Gregory Peck (whom he much resembles, especially mustachioed in Act I): egregious good looks, a body that can semaphore meaning without seeming to strike poses and an ingratiating smile. It is impossible not to like him. Alison Fraser's charms are more tart, but as with a strawberry-rhubarb pie, the tartness allows for a degree of sweetness that would be otherwise too much. And her singing voice just wraps you up and takes you home.

Romance Romance is actually two musicals. I liked the first, more lightweight "The Little Comedy," set in turn-of-the-century Vienna and based on a Schnitzler story, somewhat more than "Summer Share," with a contemporary Hamptons setting although based on a play by Jules Renard. "The Little Comedy" is that oddity, an epistolary musical, but lyricist Barry Harman and composer Keith Herrmann have turned the artifice of songs taking the form of letters to their dramatic advantage, while the same conceit is the undoing of the other recent epistolary musical, *Mail*. The difference is simply that Harman and Herrmann have wit. Their jokes are funny and their songs explore the adjacent territories of sex and love with a humane appreciation of both. *Mail* is as embarrassing as the kind of cheesecake photography that makes you feel *sorry* for the model.

"Summer Share" concerns the potential but still avoidable adultery of two ideal New Yorkers, whom we follow from sunset to dawn on the night of their major temptation. Harman's book cleverly integrates the (imagined/moral) presence of the two offstage sleeping spouses into the onstage action. Deborah Graham and Robert Hoshour, who perform multiple but unmeaty roles in "The Little Comedy," finally get a show-stopper of their own when they appear with aluminum walkers as a (comic) vision of themselves in another forty years. Bakula and Fraser's high moment is their duet, "It's Not Too Late," the one piece of music from Vienna to be reprised in the Hamptons, as sheerly likable and ingratiating a song as the "You're not sick/You're just in love" duet from *Call Me Madam*. If a single song survives this Broadway season to be sung years hence for the sheer sweetness of it, that'll be the one. And if it isn't, it'll be something else from *Romance Romance*. Harman and Herrmann, remember those names! □

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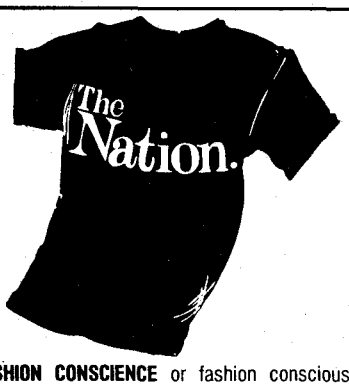

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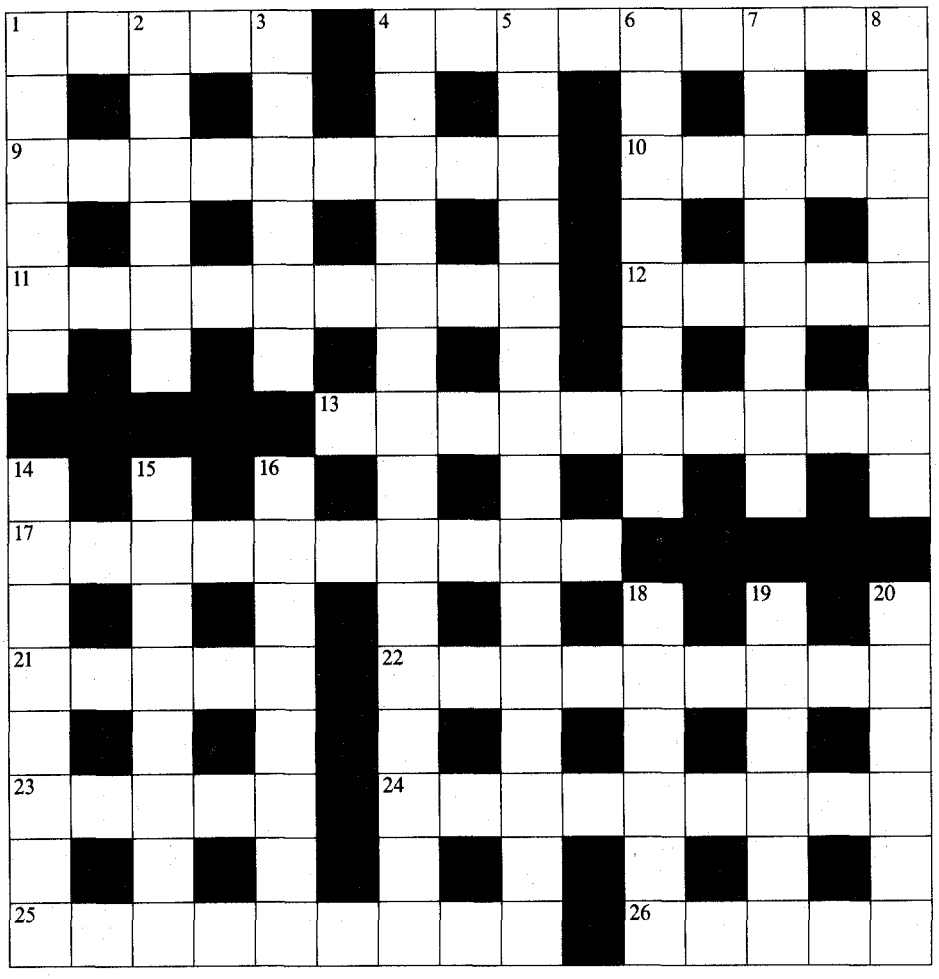
P		H		V		S		I		A				D	
P	R	O	T	E	C	T	O	R	A	T	E			O	
L		S		R		R		V		S		C		U	
I	N	T	E	G	R	A	T	E	D		B	O	M	B	
E		W		R		Y		N		W		N		L	
D	A	R	R	O	W		S	T	R	A	N	G	L	E	
P		I		W		A		S		T		L		M	
H	I	T	I	T	O	F	F		A	C	T	O	N	E	
Y		E		H		T		G		H		M		A	
S	O	R	T		J	E	R	O	M	E	K	E	R	N	
I		S		B		R		T		D		R		I	
C			A	R	M	Y	C	H	A	P	L	A	I	N	
S				A		O		I		O		T		G	
	R	E	V	E	N	U	E	C	U	T	T	E	R	S	

Crossword Puzzle No. 2198

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 The cooking of a soft-boiled egg might be, to release in return. (5)
4 The hard-of-hearing may strain to do so, being a phrase representative of the party. (9)
9 How to understand one quarter nonsense, as they say, in Maine? (9)
10 Riddles, possibly—as if Tsars might provide them! (5)
11 One plays with the 21, probably, or the cars could get wrecked. (9)
12 On the stage, she either had no parents or was told to secure her arm. (5)
13 What they did to make sausage? They have their day in spring! (10)
17 Carefully examines the engines and the cars, and puts a restriction on. (10)
21 Work period for the stage production? (5)
22 Make amends by bringing it back to me long ago, perhaps. (2,3,4)
23 Nice on the cake, but not on the wing. (5)
24 The kitty has quite a lot, as the game out west might show. (9)
25 The discriminating should have it, as well as ice cream. (4,5)
26 Belonging to them, the Ireland we know loses a wild creature. (5)

DOWN

1 Tackle, perhaps, as a ship does cargo. (4,2)
2 People having one at cards act threateningly. (6)
3 Watched the food pass on to Ed[illegible] (5)
4 Scales on the display case? (Whatever does Dick do to Jane on the see-saw!) (15)
5 and 20 A favorable roulette wheel might, by the sound of it, but, well, that's what you get if you do! (4,1,4,3,3,6)
6 Bus-wreck with the crew gathered around, mates! (9)
7 Occasionally how the switch goes. (3,3,2)
8 Break up the party, which is the Princess's, as such. (8)
14 Getting away fast, as they say, with the bird about to warble? Quite the opposite! (8)
15 Brother, such was a real painter, and a financial backer to a bad labor orginazation! (8)
16 From 2 to 6 in the game, for instance? (8)
18 The lady with it in Germany might be a lonely one! (6)
19 Very small, but one who doesn't speak gets around in here. (6)
20 See 5

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

PUZZLED?

No more cross words. Find out why "little skipper" is a "truant." Send for a free copy of Frank W. Lewis's Ground Rules to *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

X-523

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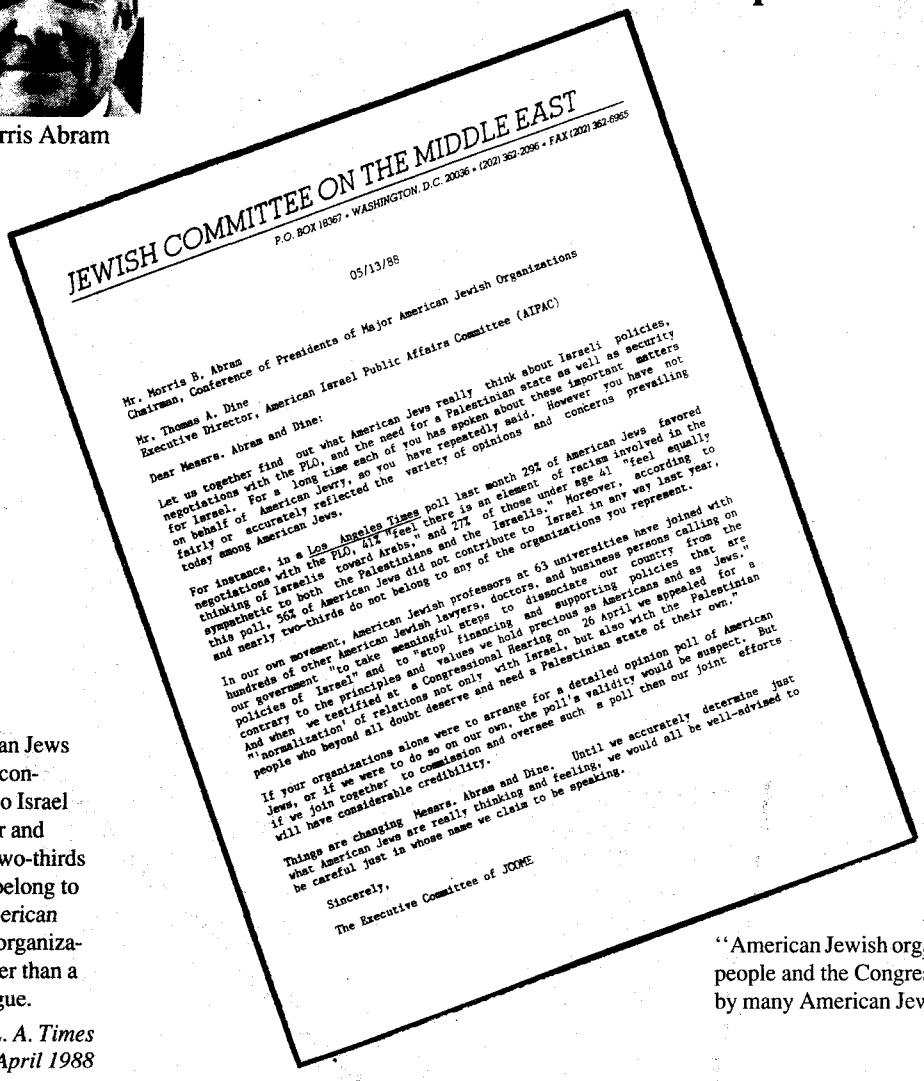
A CHALLENGE TO

"American Jewish Spokesmen"

Morris Abram

Thomas Dine



JEWISH COMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST

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05/13/88

Mr. Morris B. Abram
Chairman, Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations

Mr. Thomas A. Dine
Executive Director, American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)

Dear Messrs. Abram and Dine:

Let us together find out what American Jews really think about Israeli policies, negotiations with the PLO, and the need for a Palestinian state as well as security for Israel. For a long time each of you has spoken about these important matters on behalf of American Jewry, so you have repeatedly said. However you have not fairly or accurately reflected the variety of opinions and concerns prevailing today among American Jews.

For instance, in a Los Angeles Times poll last month 29% of American Jews favored negotiations with the PLO, 41% "feel equally sympathetic to both the Palestinians and the Israelis," and 27% of those under age 41 "feel equally thinking of Israelis toward Arabs," and there is an element of racism involved in the this poll, 56% of American Jews did not contribute to Israel in any way last year, and nearly two-thirds do not belong to any of the organizations you represent.

In our own movement, American Jewish professors at 63 universities have joined with hundreds of other American Jewish lawyers, doctors, and business persons calling on our government "to take meaningful steps to dissociate our country from the policies of Israel" and to "stop financing and supporting policies that are contrary to the principles and values we hold precious as Americans and as Jews." And when we testified at a Congressional hearing on 26 April we appealed for a "normalization" of relations not only with Israel, but also with the Palestinian people who beyond all doubt deserve and need a Palestinian state of their own.

If your organizations alone were to arrange for a detailed opinion poll of American Jews, or if we were to do so on our own, the poll's validity would be suspect. But if we join together to commission and oversee such a poll then our joint efforts will have considerable credibility.

Things are changing Messrs. Abram and Dine. Until we accurately determine just what American Jews are really thinking and feeling, we would all be well-advised to be careful just in whose name we claim to be speaking.

Sincerely,

The Executive Committee of JCOME

" Let us together find out what American Jews really think..."

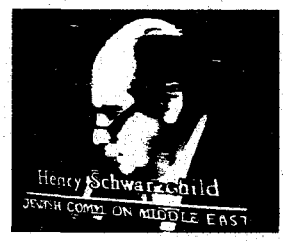
46% of college-educated Americans favor creation of a Palestinian State, 60% favor negotiations with the PLO, and 41% favor cutting off or reducing aid to Israel.

The Gallup Organization
11 March 1988

56% of American Jews did not contribute to Israel last year and nearly two-thirds do not belong to any American Jewish organization other than a synagogue.

L. A. Times
12 April 1988

C - SPAN TV



"American Jewish organizations...have made it difficult for the American people and the Congress to hear and understand the depth of anguish felt by many American Jews regarding Israeli behavior."

JCOME Congressional Testimony
26 April 1988

JCOME is an independent association of Americans formed earlier this year to give voice to the growing concerns among American Jews about Israeli policies and U.S. support for these policies. Our Statement — "Time To Dissociate From Israeli Policies" — was first published in *The Nation* on 13 February and then in *The Congressional Record* (29 Feb), *The Christian Science Monitor* (4 March) and *The New York Review Of Books* (31 March). The Statement has been endorsed by hundreds of American Jews including Professors at 63 universities throughout the country. Please help with your support and contributions to enable us to continue to stimulate a long-overdue debate about U.S.–Israeli relations and American policies in the Middle East.

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